A Kiwi Lạ̄nnạ

Kit Tiyapan

>: Kittix

Kittisak Nui Tiyapan
A Kiwi Lanna, – Bangkok: Kittix, 2003.
112 p.
1. English Literature 2. Kit Tiyapan. I. Title.
824
ISBN 974–91237–3–5

©Kit Tyabandha
(aka Kittisak Nui Tiyapan)†
All rights reserved

Published by
(God's Ayudhya's Defence)
(A Non-profit School of)
(Mathematics, Language and Philosophy)

Kittix Publishing
1564/11 Prajarastrasai 1 Road
Bangkok 10800, Thailand‡

Printed at
Chulalongkorn University Printing House
Bangkok, Thailand

and also at
Kittix Press

Typeset with TEX

God's Ayudhya's Defence and Kittix are the only two
trademarks relevant to the publication of this book

Other trademark names are included
solely for explanation.

Thailand ฿ 230.–
Elsewhere £ 10.–

---

† In Thai, 'Kittiśakd́xi Nhŭy Tı̣yàbandha̍'.

‡ Or, '1564/11 Th. Prajạrạjsạy 1, Bạngzụ̀e, Krungdẹ̀b 10800' in Thai.

May my son travel with peace May Bra Ratànàtray and all sacred things, namely Bra Sàyạmdẹvạdhirạj, *etc*, protect my son Nhŭy, that he may go to New Zealand and return safe and sound, that he may have creativity and make things good and fine.

From mother, 5 April 1983.

Ag gōha massami lōkassa jeṭhthō seṭhthō.
Ha massami āyantimā me jātinatthi.
Dāni punapabavō.

Pañca māre jinōnāthō.
Pattō sambōdhimuttamaṅ.
Catusaccaṅ pakāsesi.
Dhammacakkaṅ pavattayi.
E tena saccavacjena.
Hō tume jayamaṅgalaṅ.

Namō vimuttānaṅ.
Namō vimuttiyạ.

The exchange program between New Zealand and Thailand has only started last year, so we are the second pioneer group. We will spend our time here ten months for what would in the future become a year. For this reason we fly in later than kids from other countries, and therefore miss the orientation. For this reason special orientations have been organised for us, one in each of the two islands. For South Island students this orientation is in Christchurch.

We are eleven American Field Service scholarships students who come from Thailand to New Zealand. We fly from Thailand together with an equal number of students destined for Australia. There is nothing but laughters and fun, until we part with the Australia group and the last one of them has left the plane when we suddenly feel the solitude of the places and the country that we are going to.

The first thing that strikes me when I walk out of the plane after we have touched down at the airport is the freshness of the air around me. The plane we were on is not a big one, and it stops not far from the arrival building, to the entrance of which we simply walk from the plane. I am among the first ones to leave the aeroplane but the last one to get to the building because I spend my time wandering on the tarmac, trying to fill my lung with all the fresh air there is here.

We arrive in Christchurch on 6 April 1983 and appear on The Star as a six-by-six inches picture on the following day the morning of which Adam and Robert both of whom had recently been AFS students to Thailand join us. Also with them is a Thai student, Jack, who is very tall and has quite a prestigious family name. He becomes the centre

of everybody's attention and, apart from upsetting a cake once on to the carpet inside the living room, conducts himself most appropriately. We all stay at the Cracroft House in Christchurch. Also on The Star of Thursday 7 April is the news about Thai Air Force dropping napalm on Vietnamese troops who tried to cross the border from Kampuchea into Thailand. Our neighbours who are communist always cause us problems because either Russia or China backs them.

Dad Allister meets me outside the train station in Ashburton with his car, a yellow Hillman station-wagon, and Skampy, a small but stout dog in black and white with short, slick hairs, who turns out to be slightly paranoiac. I later meet the rest of my host family. There are Pat whom I call Mum, Nikki, Andy, Ritchie, and Flana who also lives with us. We live in a place called Allenton, though I never call it by that name, a mere ten minute's walk from Ashburton College where I am going to attend.

At school I am given a voucher. This I bring over to a shop downtown to get my school uniform which consists of a pair of black trousers, a pair of shorts, a pair of black shoes made of sheep skin and two shirts, one with short- and the other with long sleeves. I also get necessary stationaries using the voucher. Andy comes with me, or rather it is her who brings me here. She was in Thailand last year.

At Ashburton College I could have chosen to study Form 5, which is the case with many of the students from Thailand as I am to learn later. That would have been easier than Form 6 that I choose. There is another AFS student here whose name is Kelly. She comes from the US and arrived two months earlier than I did, and is also studying in the Sixth Form. Since she came here before me, her class is 601. Having arrived after her I am therefore put into the class 602, this is all very simple.

It is already Second Term now. I have missed the whole of the First Term. The group picture of our class was taken last term, so I am forever excluded from this historical piece of record unless some of my friends should have enough understanding to etch my picture into a space that is left there, perhaps intentionally, in the middle of the back row. Our teacher is Mr. Mathias but some call him P. J., which he never knows but dislikes nonetheless, though they are his initials.

There are also two students from Malaysia one of whom is a girl while the other one a boy whose name is Mat.

The niceness of the people of the land is inversely proportional to the density of the same, as some physicists might say. This is an easy rule of thumb. We have plenty of space here, so we are good to one another. This may be the case for those who were born here, but sometimes people

who come from afar carry a hatred with them here and it remains with him until he dies. Then there is not much one could do except to wait for them to expire. People never change, but we all die. In this manner this Kiwi Land has had its fair share of imported conflicts. The White Anglo-Saxon Protestants, aka WASP, quarrelled with the Catholic Irish labourers during the 19th century as one example.

The Irish came in great number because of the potato famine, that is the Great Famine during 1845 – 48. This famine was caused by a disease known as the potato blight. It hit hard because potatoes are an essential ingredient in the Irish diet. The former Irish population of 8 million fell by 2 million, half of which died from diseases like cholera, dysentery and typhus, while the other half went abroad. Some of these latter million emigrated here, and with them came the conflict between the Irish Protestants and the Irish Catholics.

The West Coast orator Richard John Seddon who went on to become the most quarrelsome prime minister between 1893 and his death in 1906, used racial hatred as one of the instruments to both obtain and maintain himself in power. The present Prime Minister, Sir Robert David Muldoon, is of an Irish-Liverpudlian lineage. He has been in his office since 1975, and is always the prime minister throughout my time here. His defeat came in July 1984, some five months after I have gone back to Thailand.

AFS started giving scholarships after World War II. Since then, New Zealand has always participated in the program. In 1947 fifty students from twelve countries went to American colleges. The program soon changed from exchanging college students to exchanging high school students. But it was still a program between the US and other countries. The Multi National Program was launched in 1970 by AFS International, and New Zealand was among its pioneers. The MNP gives its students the experience at high school in countries other than the US. Now we are here as pioneers for Thai students who come to New Zealand. Therefore our exchange period lasts only 10 months instead of the usual 12 months. As a rule, after our time in New Zealand we have to leave the country for at least a year, during which time we may not come back here. We are ambassadors to our country not emigrants. The program is not supposed to change us into a New Zealander. Among the more serious rules AFS has set for us is a rule that we may not drive a vehicle. The rule gives no explanation, but it is so strictly implemented that if they know you drive a car or a motorcycle you are sent back home immediately with no further ado. This explains why I always have my picture taken with me sitting at the wheel or on a driver's seat.

The 25th April of each year, which is also the St Mark day, is the

ANZAC day. On that day in 1915 was the debacle on Turkey's Gallipoli Peninsula where many New Zealanders died among those who joined the Australia-New Zealand Army Corps forces to fight in North Africa and Europe. Between 1914 and 1918 almost 17,000 died among the 100,000 Kiwis who joined the fight. ANZAC fought again during World War II with nearly 200,000 soldiers. This time 10,000 died. This year the ANZAC day is on Monday. It is much fun to be walk in the streets today. We only have to keep our solemn manner while standing in front of the monument of the brave soldiers who perished in the Wars. The Salvation Army sells red poppies in thousands. But there is no need to buy them really, since you can easily pick one up from anywhere. There are people everywhere. And there are also lemonade stands. The bagpipe band keeps on playing while they walk back after the ceremony. Ritchie and I follow them until they finally disperse. And even then we hang around talking to the players, all of whom are huge and stout I think they must all be a rugby player. Ritchie like military things and he joins the School Cadet. And since he is in effect my counsellor, I too join the Cadet. I is all right, and I like it since it is like the Boy Scout I used to join in Thailand, only that I think we march too much here. This evening Mum performs on the stage doing Maori dances with her group. She is not slim, yet she looks so graceful on the stage in her lightly-clad dress with the two *poi* balls that she holds in her hands and swing smoothly about her body. A Maori dress is similar for both men and women. Both have a waist wrap and a shoulder cloak.

Prince Charles (b. 1948) and Princess Diana (1961 – 1997) is on their tour to visit New Zealand. They come to Christchurch where they walk about the Cathedral Square. The Weekend Star, 30 April 1983, has pictures of both from the occasion.

During the May Holidays I travel up to Christchurch to stay with Nāuy's host family. On 11 May 1983 we go together by car to a hill to the south of Lyttelton Harbour and Christchurch. We leave our place at around 9 am. Along our way here someone was practising walking along the road side, another was on a horse back. There is a park for tourists who enjoy rambling, camping or picnic. Once there, we walk from the car park up to Big Rock and back. Then we walk to Magnificent Gully where trees are indigenous. We almost make it to the top of the hill. It is very windy.

The name of Nāuy's host dad is Watt, but we simply call him 'Dad' as we do all male host parents of our AFS friends. He is a professor of engineering and a keen photographer. He generally takes slides because it is much easier to deal with the colour and light of these than to deal with those of negatives. He does all the lab works by himself. He is

from the US, and is a professor at University of Canterbury teaching Engineering now. He seems to have been to every place in the world, for instance Russia, UK, France, Canada and Mexico, mainly for scientific meetings.

The tussocks which grow on the hills and mountains are tough. They grow everywhere and in plenty on the hills around the Lyttelton Harbour. No sheep eat them, only goats do. Some farmers keep goats in flocks specially for the purpose of munching away these things. Those whose work it is to cut tussocks are called *tussock grubbers*. We come back to the car to have lunch before returning home.

That night we entertain our hosts with our little performances of Thai arts. We decide on three sets of performances. The first one is Nāuy doing two-handed ritualistic sword dance. Then I do another dance for the sabre. After that I demonstrate alone using two swords. Really I use only the *mȧemāi* and the set formulae, that is the 3rd *māi*, the 7th *māi* and the 9th *māi*, then repeat something similar and finally I receive an unseen cut in the body and thus die. The third and last performance is singing songs in Thai with the guitar. We all get up in the end and do the party dance *Raṃvong* together. Tàuy and Nāung who had not performed earlier also help with the Raṃvong in which everyone joins, including Scott who is Nāuy's host brother. Nāuy's Mom plays and sing American folksongs on the guitar for us.

During the previous year three other Thai students came and stayed here. Two of them were Yas and Khok. I often envy Nāuy because his host parents are rich and he is always taken to places and allowed to do expensive things. Next week their daughter who is studying at a university in the US is coming home for summer. They are going to Mt. Hutt to ski.

On 12 May we go downtown to buy Thai food at Simco where imported spice mixes are sold, for example that used for *Balọ̄* (a soup). The staff or owner of it is from Hongkong. Going from Square towards Cashmere along Colombo Street the shop is on the third road that branches off to the right, probably called Lichfield Street. Opposite Simco is the Music City where I buy a sixty-minute tape cassette which costs $ 1.60. At Music Centre further down the road towards Cashmere I buy a book on Jazz improvisation for $ 22.50. There are also a book on photography for $ 1.50 and a notebook for $ 3.50. Then we walk uphill to Nāuy's house where I am staying.

I asked Nāuy how he thinks about my part of the performance last night. He says the mock fighting was exciting. But I think that it ended a little too soon and could do well with a little sense of humour at the end when I died. Complicate moves would do well if they are alternated with

simple ones. Too much repetition makes a performance boring while too frequent use of complicate moves makes it difficult for the audience to follow the show. In doing a one-man mock performance the moves need to be done faster than in a two-man combat equivalent of it. But it must also flow smoothly with no senses of rushing. Occasional jabbing is a good idea in between bouts. Beautiful pose like *Grum Traibhob* (a tight guard) seems not a bad idea.

Tonight we play cards with Mom. The game we play is called Spoon. We sit around in circle and deal four cards to every person. Spoons are placed in the middle the number of which is one less than the number of players. The remaining cards are put together in a pile, faced down in the middle of the circle. Each player takes turn picking up one card from the pile. For each card one picks up, one among the five cards he holds is discarded by putting it faced down on the table. Once the cards one holds make up two pairs, a spoon is picked up. The remaining players, upon seeing a spoon being picked up, race against one another to the remaining spoons on the table. The slowest on has to quit the table, the number of spoon subsequently reduced by one and the game continues as before until there remains only the winner.

In another card game as many cards as possible are dealt out to all the players such that everyone has the same number of cards. The remaining cards are placed in the middle. Whoever holds the two club in his hand put it down face up in the middle. Other players put down one by one a card of the same suit as the one mentioned. The person whose card proves the highest takes and keeps all the displayed cards and then shows another card from his hand, putting it face-up in the middle of the table. At the end of the game the player whose hoard of cards contains the fewest hearts wins. The game can be adapted by considering the queen of spade the same way as hearts, except that it has 13 times the value. For instance if a heart is given the value of one point, then the queen of spade is given 13. Yet another possible adaptation is for all the players to give three worst cards in his hand to the player on his right.

Dad is a very big man, but he drives a sport car so tiny its roof probably reaches up to his waist when he stands upright. He has three cars. The other two are a Colt Mirage with automatic gear and an American car which has the steering wheel on the left-hand side. This house is on the hill between Christchurch and Lyttelton Harbour. It has a central heating system but it also has a fireplace which makes it look better, more like a home. Up here on the hill it is warmer than in the city because the warmer air from there drifts upwards while colder air moves downwards. Also it is closer to the sea, and therefore not so cold in winter because sea water retains the heat it receives from the sun

better than the land does. This is the same reason that makes smoke from a fireplace rise up the chimney shaft instead of fill up the room. The smoke seeks the easiest way that leads upwards, and cooler air from inside the room flows in to replace it.

One sign on a bus in Christchurch says, 'Children must not remain seated when adults stand'. Another says, 'Please vacate this seat if required by an elderly or disabled person'. And yet another, 'Why take your car to town while the bus costs less than an ice cream?' Why indeed.

Today is 13th May. It is the day I have to go back to Ashburton I woke up a little bit late this morning. Nāuy's host parents said they would wake us up at six o'clock but it was already past 7:50 when they did. Though I have not yet eaten, I am not at all hungry. We leave at five minutes to eight because the bus leaves at 8:15. When we pass Takahe we see far away from Christchurch, in the back ground, the mountain range all white with snow. It looks so beautiful, like pictures you see in postcards. Probably the reason for the snow was the heavy rain we had last night. There was also a strong wind and the temperature was freezing. Yesterday the temperature at Christchurch, here on Cashmere, was 5°C. The wind was strong. It rained, but not heavily so. But what we had last night was a downpour.

Today four of us decide to go to Dunedin during the Queen's birthday when we shall have a holiday two weeks after school starts. We will go on Thursday after school, miss our classes on Friday and stay in Dunedin until Monday, which is the birthday of the Queen. But Nāuy and I agree among ourselves that we will visit Òn in Dunedin before school actually starts because we think there is absolutely no fun at all travelling with the girls. They are so fussy, always complaining and cause nothing but headache. It would be more fun to travel on our own. But I still do not know whether I will be able to make it. Anyhow there is a wedding in Ashburton at three in the afternoon.

We went to Cathedral Square, to where I had already been so many times that I can remember almost everything there. We went to the town hall, that is a drama theatre near the Square. We also went to Art Centre and Orana Park. The latter is an open zoo where they keep the lions. There is another park at the Magnificent Gully. Then there are Cashmere, Kiwi Point to where I ran with Nāuy and Victoria Park. The two meetings of Thai students we went to, one at Tạen's place and the other at Bajàrạ, teaches me the vanity of a group of Thai people that I will come to see time and again, not only abroad but also in Thailand, where all talks are small talks and only triviality is to be practised in earnest. There was one Thai who dyed a part of his hair golden and

burnt down a telephone box to prove his love for his girlfriend. We went to a dinner at Robert's place, to an Anglican church. The person who sits next to me on the bus has been to Thailand five times or so. And only think there were others who do not know where Thailand is.

Ashburton being only about an hour away from Christchurch by car, I arrived here in the morning. In the afternoon I go to a photograph shop to get prints I have ordered from some negatives. Then I buy a shutter release for my camera, which is rather expensive at $ 4.50 but it is necessary.

At three in the afternoon we attend a wedding at an Anglican church. The bride is Leanne and the bridegroom Alistair. Leanne is a relative from Mum's side, I think her niece. Alistair had his leg injured playing rugby, so they both sit down throughout most parts of the proceeding. His leg is put in a case of plaster of Paris. He came straight from the hospital. The wedding starts by the bride, bridegroom, best man and a bridesmaid walk together to the priest. Both the marrying parties sit listening while he speaks to them. Then both stand up, face each other, hold hands, repeat what the priest says and then Alistair puts the wedding ring on his bride's finger. A bridesmaid sings. The bride and bridegroom write something in a book under the cross.

At night there is a party at the Technical Club, which is a rugby society. There are dances and free drinks. I dance with Fiona, Grandma, Andria and Flana. It is very enjoyable. We head for home around 2 am. Grandma says that after a wedding in church there is always a supper before the breakfast the following morning. I went up to the bride and bridegroom and ask for their autographs. We drank draught Dominion Bitter, brewed and sealed in 745 ml bottles in Timaru by D. B. South Island Brewery.

Back at home I take a picture of the Southern Cross. I climb up to the roof and place my camera there because I have no tripods.

I write letters to Òn and Nāuy to say that I plan to be at Òn's place from 19 to 22 May. There are trips to North Island with AFS which is rather expensive at $ 150, to Òn's place in Dunedin, possibly to Mt. Cook with Robert, to Mt. Hutt with Robert and Andria among others, to Mt. Hutt with Grandma recently discussed last night and to some camp with the school if possible. It would be good to be able to do all these! Ritchie says we may go to Christchurch and spend some four days there. If this is so it would be good, because then I will be able to discuss the trip to Dunedin over with Nāuy.

When school starts I want to play basketball. I will also change some of the subjects I study, from Physics to Art History for example.

Everyone goes to watch a rugby match in Ashburton if there is one,

as Stewart says, and I think to myself how crazy in sports people here are. I have the Fixture List for 1983 from the New Zealand Rugby Football Union, but only went to one match when Mid-Canterbury plays against British Isles here in Ashburton. The legend to the Fixture List shows there are three types of matches. The NZRFU Fixtures, shown in capitals and the Lion Rugby Championship Division 1 and Division 11 matches. The list starts on Sunday 3 April when Wellington plays Poneke International Invitation XV in Wellington, Wasps plays Barbarians in Rotorua and Nelson Bays plays Seddon Shield Maori XV in Nelson. The last match of the year is on Monday 3 October in Greymouth when West Coast plays against Manawatu. Between the first and the last, there are matches every week throughout. The British Isles plays every few days between 14 May and 16 July. It plays against the All Black four times, in Christchurch on 4 June, in Wellington on 18 June, in Dunedin on 2 July and in Auckland on 16 July.

Breakfasts in New Zealand, after I have spent one month here, are usually made up of toasts with butter and jam. Or they can be boiled eggs on buttered toasts. These eggs are not boiled whole, together with shells, as is always done in Thailand and as is sometimes the case here. You bring water in a pot to the boil, break the shell of an egg and put the contents in the boiling water. Once the albumen has turned white, while the yolk is still not hardened, scoop them up and put on to the toasts. For drinks there may be plain water, orange juice, milk, tea, or coffee. Plain water is generally taken from the tab.

For lunch, it depends. If I eat at school it is normally packed lunch, probably two slices of toast with something in between them, which can be cheese, meat, hard-boiled eggs, vegetables, *etc* depending on what are available. With some tomato sauce the whole thing would taste somewhat better. If you have not brought your own lunch, you can buy food at school. For this you need to buy tickets, for instance pie ticket for pies. Apart from pies there are apples, crisps, ice cream, *etc*. When I am neither at school nor at home there is always Fish & Chips, but if at home it is normally mutton or lamb, potatoes and vegetables with stew on top of everything.

Evening meals, called either dinner or tea, are usually mutton, lamb or chicken together with potatoes, vegetables with stew similar to lunch, and finalised with puddings which can be fruits in syrups, ice cream and corn flakes or some other morning cereals.

Ritchie says that we are going to Christchurch for four days, which is very well for I also want to talk with Nāuy about our Dunedin trip. We get a lift by a female relative on Mum's side who is travelling up to Christchurch for a hockey match. We stay with Auntie Louis who lives

on Langoons Rd., Papanui, in Christchurch.

New Zealand is particularly marked for longevity of its people because the air here is so clean. Therefore we have quite a few elderly relatives.

Nāuy comes here with his Mom in the morning, 15 May. Mom also brings the sleeping bag that I had left at their place. The far end of Nāuy's room has a recess in the wall which is used to store things like a cupboard. I put the sleeping bag in there out of sight and then forget about it. I give Nāuy the slides from Thailand because I think his Dad and Mom may want to see some pictures of Thailand.

In the afternoon we go to a museum in town. Ritchie buys a souvenir ring for $ 2.60 to give to me. We look inside the museum for two hours. There are things which belonged to European settlers, statues, stuffed animals and New Zealand birds and belongings of Tensing Norgay who was the first person in the world to have climbed Mt. Everest successfully. There is a room with displays about the Antarctic and expeditions to the South Pole, a room for prehistoric animals, in particular the birds of the moas family the largest of which was *Dinornis maximus*, literally *the largest of the terrible birds*. Kiwis are also in the moas family. There is a room with minerals on display, for example a synthetic diamond made to the appearance of some real, world-famous diamonds and the largest diamond in the world, and there is a uranium containing minerals. These minerals are placed on a circular, revolving plate which is partitioned into four quarters by plates in the shape of a cross. Each of these partition contains a piece of rock that either is hid from view or stares into the nozzle of the Geiger counter which has a red light to indicate the amount of radiation it detects. The museum also has some ancient potteries from Bạ̀n Jiang in Thailand. There are stuffed insects, elephants, rhinoceros and bisons, a planetarium and a big, revolving globe.

From Christchurch to Dunedin the train ticket costs $ 24.40 and the bus costs approximately $ 20 while from Ashburton to Dunedin these are respectively $ 19.10 and approximately $ 16. Also to Dunedin, the bus ticket from Timaru is $ 10 and from Geraldine $ 11.90. Since even the bus tickets are this expensive, Nāuy and I discuss with each other a while then decide that we shall not go down to Dunedin before the next term starts as we think that our host families probably will take us that way one day.

The sides of the wall at the Cathedral are beautifully lit at night, like Thailand during the bicentenary of the Ratànàkọsindra last year with its light and sound exhibitions. A tripod costs $ 57.75 at Langwood Camera near the Cathedral. Under a monument here is written, 'In grateful remembrance of the sons and daughters of Canterbury who fell

in the Great War 1914–1918. Give peace in our time O Lord'. The public library here in Christchurch has quite a few interesting books, especially those about music and photography.

An ad on the bus says, 'Bus off peak hours ... the closest thing to free travel', another, 'Bus twice as much while it costs half as much. Off peak fares are here to stay' and yet another says, 'We'll drive your kids wild these holidays' The bus costs 25c to go from Papanui to Cathedral Square, from Papanui to Auntie Louis' place, and from Cashmere to Square.

Today, 16 May 1983, I wake up very early in the morning, wash my clothes and hang them out to dry. Having finished all this both Auntie Louis and Ritchie are still in bed sleeping. I make something to eat and then break my fast. Nāuy rings to say that he will not meet me at the post office at 10 o'clock as we have agreed because he has to go to Geraldine with his family earlier than planned. He asks me to deposit the $ 27.30 for the T-shirt under the name of Mrs. Jones together with her address in the back. The money is for the $ 26 price of the T-shirt and the cost for sending it to me in Ashburton.

From where we stay I take a bus to Cathedral Square. I get off at the office of New Zealand Airlines to get some brochures which I think would be a good thing to do in order to know something about the North Island before I go there with AFS next holidays. Otherwise I may not be able to make the best out of the trip. A staff walks up to me and asks whether I need any help. I have a feeling that I must have been in here too long, so I pick up a few brochures before saying good bye.

I find my way to the library, asking several people along the way before I finally reach it. There is a book which teaches how to make an oboe's reed. The methods seem to me very complicated, so I give up writing it down to give to a friend at my school in Thailand who plays the instrument. Taking a photocopy is also out of question since I hardly have any money and will certainly have to walk my way back to Papanui if I do.

From the library I go back to the Square where there is some one giving a speech on Jesus and God. People gather around to listen to him. There is one group among these who keep on questioning whatever he says. The exchanges and the touché are really fun to listen to. After the fist group finishes, there is another speaker who wears black cloak and trousers like some ancient warrior. At his waist is a plastic sword, just like a child! The ladder on which he stands while giving his speech is profusely decorated. The styles of his speech and his dress attract some hard-core youngsters and punks, both of whom gather around him in great number. Among these is a group of seven or eight punks who

wear their hair in most discordant of fashions. One shaved his head clean, another wears his hair like a native American Indian, that is to say, shaving both sides of his head clean to leave a strip of hair running down the middle of his head, just like what a skunk looks like. Yet others wear their hair like that of a hedgehog, that is pointing in all directions.

At Cathedral Square there is an underground public toilet, let downwards from above by a set of steps. On the surface it does not look like there is a toilet underneath. I have been to the Square several times already but have never seen it until now. Out of curiosity I briefly survey it.

On my way back I get on the wrong bus. The driver says something about turning right or left, but I pay him no attention. It turns out that there are two different routes for the Papanui bus, namely Papanui and Papanui 1. Both of them pass Cathedral Square before going along Victoria St. and Papanui Road. But before they reach the railway Papanui 1 turns right on to Main North St. while Papanui turns left towards Harewood Road. At first when the Papanui 1 I am on turns right I still do not notice there is anything amiss. But a few streets later it suddenly occurs to me that the bus is turning so often whereas the bus I was on this morning just went straight on. I decide to get off the bus and retrace my steps more than five kilometres before getting on the right Papanui bus. I lose about two hours with the bus.

People say they prefer Thailand to New Zealand because the former has more night life and entertainment places.

On the morning of 17 May we go with Auntie Louis to Canterbury University. She parks her car at the car park and we walk around, I take pictures of the buildings, the library both inside and outside, then we return to the car park. Then Auntie Louis takes us to visit a few friends of hers who are generally speaking elderly people.

I go to Timaru with Andrea and Ritchie on 18 May 1983. I have a job delivering newspapers which I did today in the morning. It was very cold outside and I had to take a warm shower when I came back. The evening news on the television says that there is a heavy snow in Dunedin which causes a lot of traffic jam.

We go to Timaru at noon. The sky is overcast, but there is some sunshine falling on the distant mountains. I take a picture of Timaru which shows both the Pacific and the buildings, another picture of the town with snowy mountains as its background and another one of St. Mary's Anglican Church. The aperture is always kept at the widest my camera provides, which is 1/4 inches, while the shutter speed is either 1/125 or 1/60 seconds.

Those still learning how to drive put a sign *instructional car* on the

roof of their cars to let other people know. Grown on the fields which lie between Timaru and Ashburton are strawberry, various fruits, grass for hay, weeds and berries. For animals there are mainly sheep, some cows and some horses, perhaps exclusively for racing.

South from Christchurch the road divides into two parallel roads both of which lead southwards. One passes by Burnham, crosses over Rakaia River into Rakaia, then passes Ashburton after which it crosses over two other rivers, Ashburton River and Rangitata River into Temuka. The other road heads away from the coast and has less traffic compared with the first one. It passes Darfield, Glentunnel, Windwhistle, Rakaia Gorge, Mt. Hutt, Staveley, Mt. Somers, Mayfield and Geraldine. At Glentunnel and Windwhistle one can turn right and head towards Lake Coleridge, Springfield and West Coast. One can turn left at Mt. Hutt to go to Methven and Ashburton.

Today, 19 May 1983, I go with Grandma and Ritchie to see a film at Tinwald Memorial Hall, the same place where I saw the Sound of Music. The film is the World Safari by Alby Mangels, a documentary film about two Australians who travelled around the world in a sailing ship and a van. It shows the way of life of people in the many countries they passed through, 56 altogether. They sailed from Australia to Tonga, Palmyra, Taraua, Mauru, Ponape, Guam, all of which are islands in the Pacific ocean. After that they carried on to Tokyo, Hongkong, Bangkok, Penang, Calcutta, Kashmia, Delhi, Bombay, Seychelles, Mombassa from where they then wound their way though Africa to Cape Town, then up through Congo and the Sahara desert to Amsterdam.

Primitive, native Africans hunt and fight with shield and spear. Their shield is made of animal hide, cut into a circular shape and attached to or rather pierced through by a long pole. To this effect they can use both the spear and the poled shield as walking sticks when they are attacking nothing or nobody. The shield they wield in their left hand while in their right the spear which is held in a throwing position. When they fight the shield is held in front to protect, and is moved about to deceive the enemy. For attack there are only two moves, either the shield is lifted up and the spear attacks from below or vice versa, that is to say, the shield lowered down while the spear attacks from above it. At all times the spear is held close to the right ear.

The ground floor of the post office in Ashburton has two sections, that is the post office saving bank and the mail sections. I come here either to send a letter or to withdraw money. I have only deposited money once, when I first came here. Today there is $ 75 more in my account, which I think must have come from AFS. It is probably a pocket money that is meant to last for several months. I would be rich if this is monthly.

You can find two kinds of rice in New Zealand, one with short grain the other with long grain. The latter is similar to Thai rice. I had never come across short-grained rice in Thailand, that is in my home town Jiangmhăi from where I seldom was away. I do not know that the grains of the Japanese rice are short.

Don't Ask Me is a television program that teaches a variety of things some of which are quite interesting. For example yesterday there was something about bicycle. Modern bicycles were compared with penny-farthings which is less stable. There is a rule of thumb which tells us whether one bike is more stable than another. From the handle bar there is a prong with two shafts leading down towards the front axle. In modern bikes these shafts are not straight but curved forwards in the middle. Their upper part is in line with the axis around which the handle turns, forming a straight line with it. Extend this straight line downwards until it meets the vertical line which passes the front wheel axle and we have a point. A bicycle is most stable when this point of intersection has half the height of that of the axle.

My host family is a typical New Zealand family, which means that there is a craze for sports. Both of my sisters play hockey every weekend, Mum and Dad are swimming coaches and Ritch plays basketball. Every country has two favourite sports. Here it is hockey and rugby; in England it is football and rugby, in Thailand football and basketball and in the US American football and basketball.

On Sunday there was a match on Sport On One between British Isles and Bay of Plenty. The British Isles led 22:0 during the first half, and won in the end with the score 34:16.

At Ashburton College I am in the class 602 which is looked after by a teacher whom some of my friends call P J. Never once have called him by that name, how could you call a teacher a jean. He teaches Computer Studies. Our school has a new computer laboratory with about ten Apple PC's. Most students learn Basic, some does Pascal. I only study the former. My maths teacher wears his moustache like Einstein. For English, Art History and Music I have excellent teachers from whom I am learning so much.

My Geology teacher is known as 'Worm', a name that he understandably despises. Myself I never think of him by this name. How could one do this to his teacher. He takes us once on a field trip in search of fossils on the mountain, Mt. Somers. All the mountains of New Zealand were once under the Pacific ocean some millions of years ago. They are limestone mountains, and consequently are rich in fossils of creatures in the sea both large and small. We only find small ones, generally shells and worms, but operators of rock-crushing machines at the Victory Lime

Work here occasionally comes across those of large dinosaurs. I look for some of these but it is not my day.

We learn many things in Music. We compose short passages, identify intervals, follow the recorded music on scores, and learn the harmony and history of music. Some of the composers about whom we learn are Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750), Paul Hindemith (1895 – 1963), Gustav Mahler (1860 – 1911) and Arnold Schönberg (1874 – 1951). We learn the development of the structure and form in music, for example the sonata. We learn about the Hindemith's opera *Mathis der Maler*, and about Schönberg's dodecaphonic scale, the word which means that it has twelve tones.

In English we study among other things James K. Baxter's poems, Swarthout's Bless the Beasts and Children, Frederick Forsyth's The Day of the Jackal and Shakespeare's Macbeth. In his *Bless the Beasts and Children* Swarthout had struck deep into American value. The bloodthirsty killing of buffaloes in the name of sport is one fact that Swarthout criticised on American society. This killing of the buffaloes is shown in parallel with children being killed emotionally by their parents. Swarthout tells us that in American society, children are being starved of love and affection from their parents. The attitude of American parents that money can buy happiness, and that they can buy their children the materials goods rather than give them their love and time is yet another fact which is criticised by Swarthout. The Americans tend to live in the world of fantasy and make-believe. This attitude comes through the media, films and television, and is inherent in their myths and legends. This has a great effect on their children for they will believe and follow what they see on the films. Swarthout stresses the importance of leadership when Cotton says that he is the only one who could control the group and make them succeed and become independent. The other children follow him at first. Then Lally 2 becomes the first one to prove his independence when he decides to go on without him. To show us how important it is for us to protect the wild life of the world and make the better environment for our children, Swarthout wrote the lines that begin with 'O twayne me a twim, where the ffubalo jim', which is to be the parody of 'O give me a home, where the buffalo roam'. In effect, he shows us through his novel how sick is the American society. Every one of the children is good enough and has full chance to succeed, and yet everyone had failed from the American point of views. He wrote, 'Competition would horn them down and tall them up', 'Competition inevitably divided the deviant from the normal, the loser from the winner', and 'Incentive was thus inherent in the system as it was in the American way of life'.

In Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, the idea that 'things are not always what they seem to be', plays the most important role. To start with, we hear the witches at the beginning of the play saying, 'Fair is foul, and foul is fair'. Macbeth also says it himself, 'So foul and fair a day I have not seen'. Duncan trusts Macbeth as his most faithful soldier, but the latter betrays and kills him while he is sleeping. Duncan's words,

> There is no art
> to find the mind's construction in the face.
> He was a gentleman on whom I built
> An absolute trust.

are alternated immediately by Macbeth's entering the scene. Things are not what they seem to Duncan. The clothing imagery emphasises that reality and appearance are not the same.

> The Thane of Cawdor lives: why do you dress me
> In borrowed robes?' (I.III.109 – 10)

Antitheses are also often used for the same reason.

The use of supernatural forces translates evil into the metaphysical, that is outside man's control. It also telescopes the time. The time imagery, that is the metaphors related to time, is found throughout the play.

> Had I but died an hour before this chance,
> I had lived a blessed time; for, from this instant,
> There's nothing serious in mortality: (II.III.91 – 3)

And when he was told by Seyton of his wife's death,

> She should have died hereafter;
> There would have been a time for such a word.—
> To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
> Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
> To the last syllable of recorded time;
> And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
> The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
> Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player,
> That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
> And then is heard no more: it is a tale
> Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
> Signifying nothing. (V.IV.17 – 28)

The Wheel of Fortune turns from good fortune to misfortune and back again. Examples of misfortunes are death, disaster and tragedy. Disorder and order, these are antithesis to each other. War is comparable with

storm because it is a social disorder while the latter is a disorder in nature. War is a national disorder whereas storm a natural one. Tragedy involves a fall from praise and position of power, a noble figure who may be attractive, a floor of personality and character, outside forces, and the disaster of the protagonist.

In London during the 18th century before David Garrick (1717 –1779) appeared on the scene, over 200 performances of Macbeth in 41 years had followed D'Avenant's version which shortened and reworded almost the whole text. Flavour of language had been sacrificed for the prosaic Restoration clarity. For example, D'Avenant changed the texts into the following.

> *King*: What aged man is that? if we may guess
> His Message by his Looks, he can relate
> The Issue of the Battle!
>
> *Malcolm*: This is the valiant Seyton
> Who like a good and hardy Soldier fought
> To save my Liberty. Hail, worthy Friend,
> Inform the King in what Condition you
> Did leave the Battle?

Garrick would have nothing of this. He restored the Shakespearian reading.

> *King*: What bloody man is that? he can report
> As seemth by his plight, of the revolt
> The newest state.
>
> *Malcolm*: This is the sergeant
> Who, like a good and hardy soldier, fought
> 'Gainst my captivity. Hail, Hail, brave friend!
> Say to the king the knowledge of the broil
> As thou did'st leave it.

D'Avenant's explicable alterations are due largely to his zeal in elucidation. Shakespeare's texts are full of obscurities and ambiguities in language and thought. This equivocation is his strength as well as his style. Even the titles of his plays say all this. For example, the title 'The Midsummer Night's Dream' can be interpreted in at least four different ways, namely 'the Midsummer Night *is* Dream', 'the Midsummer Night *has* Dream', the possessive 'the Dream of Midsummer Night', and 'the Night's Dream of Midsummer'. By using the apostrophe, he makes the title of his plays change its nuance beautifully. This becomes even more obvious in the case of *Love's Labour's Lost*.

Again, in the D'Avenant version, Lady Macbeth speaks after having read the letter from her Lord,

> Glamis thou art, and Cawdor, and shalt be
> What thou art promis'd: Yet I fear thy Nature
> Has too much of the milk of human kindness
> To take the nearest way: Thou would'st be great,
> Thou dost not want Ambition, but the Ill
> Which should attend it: what thou highly covet'st
> Thou covet'st holily; Alas! thou art
> Loth to play false, and yet would'st wrongly win!
> Oh! how irregular are thy Desires?
> Thou willingly, Great Glamis, would'st enjoy
> The end without the means! Oh haste thee hither,
> That I may pour my Spirits in thy ear:
> And chastise with the valour of my Tongue
> Thy too effeminate desires of that
> Which supernatural assistance seems
> To crown thee with.

This conveys only the literal sense of the Shakespeare's words, but misses the poetry a mile. Here is how Garrick's restoration runs.

> Glamis thou art, and Cawdor – and shalt be
> What thou art promis'd. Yet do I fear thy nature:
> It is too full o' th' milk of human kindness
> To catch the nearest way. Thou wouldst be great,
> Are not without ambition, but without
> The illness should attend it. What thou wouldst highly
> And yet wouldst strongly win. Thou'dst have, great Glamis,
> That which cries, 'thus must thou do, if thou have me
> 'And that which rather thou dost fear to do,
> 'Than wishest should be undone.' Hie thee hither
> That I may pour my spirits in thine ear,
> And chastise, with the valour of my tongue,
> All that impedes thee from the golden round
> Which fate and metaphysic aid doth seem
> To have thee crown'd withal.

Tension is a word which recurs in any discussion about drama. It is the setting of situation in which we cannot know what is going to be next. It makes the audience of the play wait with great anxiety, for we do not know what will come next. Usually it is used at the point just before reaching the climax of the story. It is often carried out by the hesitancy in the character's decision the effect of which can make the

situation better of worse. The first decision comes to us after Macbeth has heard the prophecy of the witches and he considers killing the good king Duncan. The tension becomes more and more intense when he knows that his way to the throne is blocked by Malcolm, and when Lady Macbeth tries to persuade him to kill Duncan. This tension leads up to his murdering Duncan, after which it is resolved. After that, another tension is built up when he and Lady Macbeth hear the knock at the gate. This is resolved with the discovery of the king's body and Macbeth's coronation. Tensions also build up in their own imagination from the guilt and the fear that their hideous deed shall be discovered. These are resolved by Lady Macbeth's and Macbeth's deaths. The tension in the banquet scene is resolved with Macduff joining Malcolm and comes back to revenge. There is also a tension while we wait for each of the prophecies to come true, and this is resolved when it does.

We had a drama test about tensions in *Macbeth*, and I have not done well because towards the end of my essay it must have been me who wrote the following.

> The tension in Macbeth's dream led to his second meeting with the witches that give him another three prophecies. The tension from the second prophecies he had given that become more intense when we heard the news that Birham Wood is removing to the castle (that is including in the prophecy) and when he heard the last revealing of the prophecy of 'men of woman born' led to his dead. The tension when Macduff refused to come to the banquet that led to the killing of Macduff's family later. The tension from the news that Banquo is dead but his son, Fleance, escape make Macbeth to be more sinking in his own degradation of his mind and led to his dead at the end.

There you go! What I really meant, however, was that Macbeth's meeting with the witches gives him three more prophecies among which is the one where the Birnam Wood moves to the castle. The revelation to the prophecy *Men of no Woman-born* leads to his death, and so on.

We plot the graph of Macbeth's fortunes and compare this with the graph of his courage. And I draw the stage settings for the Act II Scene III of the play. I put a well in the middle. Behind the well are two crenellated walls, one behind another, with five torches on them. The walls end at an angle tower on the left. On the right of the well is another wall where there is a gate. On top of this gate is the room where Duncan sleeps.

It was Scotland in 1745 when the scenes of *Macbeth* took place. North Berwick is east of Edinburgh on the southern shore of the Firth of Forth, on the place were East Lothian is now. The location of Fife remains unchanged to this day, which means that it extended from the northern

shore of the Firth of Forth up to the Firth of Tay. Glamis is not far to the west of Dundee. To the east of Inverness, on the eastern shore of the Moray Firth, is Culloden. Killie Crankie is to the south of Blair Atholl now.

Macbeth, King Lear, Cymbeline, and most of Shakespeare's historical plays are based on the *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (1578) that was written by Rapael Holinshed (*c.*1520 – *c.*1580). The same is also true with the plots of the plays written by other Elizabethan dramatists. For his Macbeth, Shakespeare modifies the material that he takes from the *Chronicles* because his concern is in the personal aspects of the murder and treachery rather than politics. In Holinshed's work Duncan was a meek and rather weak king, he and Macbeth are cousins, and Duncan died in an ambush. Under the Scottish law of that time Duncan may not name his son to succeed him as a king, and therefore it was Macbeth who had the real claim to the throne.

Original sin is the idea that people put themselves before the other, that is to say, that they are selfish. An example of this is the Christian believe about paradise and the fruit. The three traits characteristic to man, namely ambition, intelligence and weakness, are a three-pronged weapon because neither does intelligence imply wisdom, weakness gentleness, nor ambition virtue. In other words, the fool is foul but fair.

James Keir Baxter (1926 – 1972) was a son of a self-educated Otago farmer of Scottish descent and his wife who is a graduate in Old French from Newnham College, Cambridge, whose father is a professor of English and Classics at the University of Canterbury. According to himself, his tutors were Aphrodite, Bacchus and the Holy Spirit, 'but the goddess of good manners and examinations passes withheld her smile on me', he added. Later he became a Catholic, engaged in social work, and then left NZ for Jerusalem. He once said, 'One of the great crimes of society is to be poor'. I learn his poem, the *High Country Weather*, with my English teacher Mr. Lonsdale. It begins with,

> Alone we are born
> And die alone;
> Yet see the red-gold cirrus
> Over snow-mountain shine.

One favourite theme of his is the conflict between bodily desires and religious believes, in other words between earthly love and transcendental love, as can be seen in *The First Communions*,

> 'Men! You men! You don't know how it is:
> How every woman is torn in half between
> The conscience and the flesh. We roast in pain,

God's whores, each one of us, burnt black by kisses.

This creates social problems, especial for young girls who then become frequently exploited and misused, as can be seen in the *Pig Island Letters* (1966),

Hoyoake yammering from a kauri stump –
God save us all! I need a stomach pump.

He portrays his identity in *He Waiata mo Te Kare*, that is *a song for an object of affection*, a song to his own wife,

Each grey hair in my beard
Is there because of a sin,

The mirror shows me An old tuatara,
He porangi, he tutua,†
Standing in his dusty coat.

Baxter knows much about the Maori people and culture, and about the New Zealand life style. In his *Inscription for the wall of a power station* he uses many Maori names, and has written a phrase in Maori which means that the water is owned by Pharoah, that is to say, the New Zealand government. Also in the same poem he tells about one of the unsolved problems of NZ, that is the unemployment, 'Today so many statistics of unemployment'. Death is to him like a returning home. He used to work in a TB hospital.

In *The Morgue* the patients shudder whenever they pass the morgue, 'The room where Death lived'. But when finally he, with broom and bucket, entered it, he found that there was nothing there to fear.

...Only the bare close concrete wall,
A slab of stone, and a wheeled canvas stretcher.
For Death had shifted house to his true home
And mansion, ruinous, of the human heart.

He compares the plundering of a beehive by he and his friends to the rape of Carthage ‡ and Troy¶.

Fallen then the city of instinctive wisdom.
Tragedy is written distinct and small:
A hive burned on a cool night in summer.
But loss is a precious stone to me, a nectar

---

† A madman, a nobody,

‡ In Africa. Founded 814 BC, taken by the Vandals in AD 439, and annihilated by the Arabs around 698.

¶ In Asia Minor. Destroyed towards either the end of the 13^{th} century BC or the beginning of the 12^{th} century BC, discovered in the 19^{th} century by Schliemann.

Distilled in time, preaching the truth of winter
To the fallen heart that does not cease to fall.

Somehow the action of the bees that 'Stabbed, and died in stinging' reminds me of the *kamikaze* pilots and the suicide bombers of the Middle East, when 'yet still their suicidal live raiders dived and clung to our hands and hair'. He tells us to take nothing for granted, as in the *Inscription for the wall of a power station* where he says that we should remember whenever we use the electricity all the work and the sacrifice of the workers to bring us our everyday comfort,

When you plug the cord in for the electric toaster
Remember the blood of men is flowing through it.

In studying a poet like Baxter, one looks both at the theme and those features beyond it. I like to call this theme the *first theme* and all the philosophical as well as the interesting features beyond it the *second theme.* These features are, for example, the atmosphere and character creation, didactic intention, expansion of consciousness, imaginative stimulation, ingenious plotting, insight into life and truth, moral teaching, political warning, sense of locality, and social comment.

The Day of the Jackal is a story about an assassin the identity of whom remains unknown even after his death. The idea and the theme of the story refer to the political history of France and Algeria after the Second World War, that is when the president of France was Charles de Gaulle. He was a good president, but he also had many enemies. The main enemy of his was the Organisation Armée Secrète, which was a powerful group of terrorists backed up by many rich businessmen. The OAS had tried several times to assassinate the president. Every time they failed. This makes the security measure by the French government to be tightened up the more. The Jackal is chosen for the next attempt to assassinate de Gaulle. He is a professional marksman, an outsider for he is English, and speaks French fluently. Forsyth makes the character of his novel, the Jackal, both anonymous and mythic. He works alone and remains forever unknown. His second character is a man who hunts down the Jackal, the hunter of a hunter. We stand by our protagonist because Forsyth has equipped him with an extraordinary ability and courage, and isolated him from the world around him. His technical knowledge of gun and mechanics is both detailed and definitive.

Algeria had been under the Ottoman Empire since the 16^{th} century. The french colonisation started in 1827, and the country was taken by France in 1830. During 1830 – 39 the capture of the capital Alger was held, 1839 – 47 the capturing of other towns, and 1852 – 1870 the total occupation. The provisional government of the french Republic was con-

stituted in 1944. It was Algeria that started the events on 13 May 1958 which are responsible for the fall of the 4th Republic. The five Republics of France are namely the First, September 1792 – May 1804; Second, 25 February 1848 – 2 December 1852; Third, 4 September 1870 – 10 July 1940; Fourth, 3 June 1944 – 4 October 1958; and Fifth, from 4 October 1958. On 1st November 1954 the Algerian rebels struck at the French in seventy places throughout Algeria, thus began one of the bitterest anti-colonial struggles in modern times. Recalled to command in May 1958 because of the Algerian crisis, Charles de Gaulle (1890 – 1970) approved the new constitution which founded the present Fifth Republic. Being a military general, he surprised the *Front de libération nationale* (National Liberation Front) by offering the Algerians three possible choices, namely an outright independence, the integration of Algeria into France, or the Algerian self-rule with financial aids from France. The Algerians chose outright independence. De Gaulle became President of the France in 1959. The *pieds noirs* rose against him in 1960 but were forced to give way. He proclaimed the independence of Algeria on 3rd July 1962. The OAS was a murderous secret organisation which oppose with violence the Algerian independence after the military putsch of Alger (1961 – 63). It was backed by rich upper-class financiers and led by middle-class army officers who had served or lived in Algeria. The majority of the members were from the lower-classes who had fought in Algeria. They were ignorant of politics and believed that they could turn the clock back and retain the privileges they had enjoyed before 1954. It was directed by the generals Salan and Jouhaud until the time of their arrest. *The Day of the Jackal* is mainly set in the Continent. Most of the action takes place in France, and the assassination attempt was on Sunday 25 August 1963 at the Place du Juin 18 in Paris.

Frederick Forsyth (b. 1938) was a Reuters correspondent and BBC radio and television reporter. He left the BBC in what he calls *a huff*, and until late 1969 had never written a word of fiction. He was broke and lived on kindness in a friend's flat, then he sat down at his typewriter and wrote in 35 days *The Day of the Jackal* (1970), an immediate success. *The Odessa File* (1972) he wrote in 24 days after 12 months of planning and research. Then he wrote *The Dogs of War* (1974) and retired to a farmland out of Enniskerry in County Wicklow, Dublin, before returning to writing again to produce *The Devil's Alternative* (1979), *The Fourth Protocol* (1984), *The Negotiator* (1990), *The Fist of God* (1994) and *Icon* (1996). *The Negotiator* was written at the end of the Cold War. It has suddenly become a foreboding novel since the events in New York City on 11th September 2001. A financier in the US masterminds a crime against his nations and the world by organising the bloody kidnapping

of the son of the US president while putting the blame on the Russians. All this because he wants the Oil in the Middle East.

We also study *An Inspector Calls* (1945) by John Boynton Priestley (1894 – 1984). Priestley was born in Bradford, the son of a school master. At the age of 16 he began writing pieces for Bradford newspaper. He served in the army throughout the war of 1914 – 18. From 1919 he studied at the Trinity Hall, Cambridge. His work, *An Inspector Calls*, shows us the apparent respectability and prosperity of the middle-class, and then reveals the rottenness behind the façade. He could well have written this play wholly from experience, since he fought in World War I and wrote it towards the end of World War II. The play is a warning to the whole of Europe of 1912, and to the world in general during 1939 – 45. Arthur Birling gives us a hint of something amiss.

> A man has to make his own way – has to look after his family too, of course, when he has one – and so long as he does that he won't come to much harm. But the way some of these cranks talk and write now, you'd think everybody has to look after everybody else, as if we were all mixed up together like bees in a hive – community and all that!

His words are immediately replied by those of the Inspector Goole, who says that everybody in the Birling family is involved in the death of Eva Smith.

> There are millions and millions of Eva Smiths and John Smiths still left with us, with their lives their hopes and fears, their suffering, and chances happiness, all intertwined with our lives, with what we think and say and do. We don't live alone. We are members of one body. We are responsible for each other. And I tell you that the time will soon come when, if men will not learn that lesson, then they will be taught it in fire and blood and anguish.

And rightly he was, because we have been taught it in fire and blood and anguish. The importance of community and common interests is the theme of much of Priestley's work. The play is set in 1912, when men like Arthur Birling talked confidently about the future, unaware of the disasters that would soon arrive. After the Inspector has left the room, everyone falls into discussion and divide themselves into two groups, namely those who feel guilty and those who do not. It is the younger generation, sheila and Eric, who feel guilty whereas the older generation, for example Mr and Mrs Birling, try to forget that the thing has ever happened. Some of the themes of this story are the sharing of guilt, generation gap, social justice, and class complex. As Shakespeare has said, 'Fair is foul and foul is fair', it is difficult to draw the line between right and wrong. Sometimes there is only a fine line dividing

the two.

Gerald: After all, y'know, w're respectable citizens and not criminals.

Inspector: Sometimes there isn't as much difference as you think. Often, if it was left to me, I wouldn't know where to draw the line.

This story follows a typical line. One may look at it as having a structure of four parts, consecutively exposition, complications, crisis and denouement. From the beginning is the exposition until Inspector Goole appeared at the door. Then the story changes into the complications, until Eric entered and everyone stared at him when it then changes again into the crisis which ends when Inspector Goole told everybody to share their guilt. Until now the degree of interest of the story has always risen, but after this it falls as it enters the denouement phase which reaches a minimum when the character of the Inspector was questioned. The degree of interest rises again towards the end when Mr Birling answered the telephone and told everyone that there is a police inspector coming.

Few people read poetry after they leave school, equally few read plays or go to the theatre, but a great number continues to read novels. Each novel has its own meaning, plot and purposes. In Bless the Beasts and Children, Swarthout sets his story at Grand Canyon in order to make a contrast between this *Garden of Eden* and the cruelty of those who kill buffaloes as sport. If we read it carefully, we will see that the story is not a mere alternation of events. What Swarthout tries to tell us is the vulnerability of our society, for example the lack of loving and caring between parents and their children, the value we put on winning, and the believe that only the stronger should live. The effect of this misconception in this case is worse than we could guess, that is the death of a boy.

Another purpose of a novel is to criticise the world's politics. We can find this in *Smith's Dream* by C. K. Stead. The name *Smith* is probably chosen by Stead for his main character for the reason that it is a very common name. One may compare him, as one reads, with any person one knows. The story warns us about the American involvements. It also warns us about the spreading of communism. An example of the involvement of the US in many countries is shown in the following lines.

> Again there was silence, until Willoughby spoke again, 'I've been in this business a long time. Not just, South-east Asia. South America too. All over in fact'.

The anti-hero in the protagonist makes it is easier for us to accept his action, since we sympathise with him. The following shows Smith's

weak side.

> Sitting on the floor of Jesperson's office trying to clear his mouth of blood, Smith veered between two intense feeling, opposite yet closely connected. One – the negative – was a simple feeling of regret at having lost his tooth.

It is interesting to compare a film with the original story. Usually the book is more successful because good books always have at least two themes going in parallel with each other, and usually it is only possible to make the one in the foreground into a film. The other theme in the background is usually philosophical or contains some abstract ideas, which makes it difficult, if not impossible, to put it into a film. Comparing *The Day of the Jackal* with the film made from it, the book is definitely the more successful. The film is aptly done, however, and it is a good interpretation of the story by someone who has done his research and homework well. But in the film, for instance, the many interesting places are either reduced or lost in their details due to the lack of time. Through the film we can enjoy watching the action of the characters, but through the book we may also join them in their ideas and plans. Tiny details are also easier to read than to watch. For one thing, the film shows things in two dimensions whereas the book shows them using only one, that is as a train of words. The brain can turn both of these into a 3-d representation, but it is easier if the information comes in one dimension instead of two. Information passed in 2-d is prone to losses. It also requires a more complicated technique both to pass and to process it. In 1-d, however, one may use all the available descriptive and narrative techniques to pass on the physical information with the minimum loss. As for the abstract ideas and philosophies in the second theme, these techniques in 1-d are perhaps the only way to pass them on.

The description and simple narration in the novel suits the Jackal's character. This is shown in the film by the use of no background musics. Some symbolic landmarks are needed in the film in order to show that the scenes are in France. The high-angled shot of the Jackal is to make it appears as a narration. We merely watch him doing things, and are not involved in what he does. The film dices a story into small parts and then assemble some of these parts together to make a smaller physical model of it out of them. Some of the details are changed to make the end product coherent and appealing to the eyes. Often the time duration of events, or even their order, is altered. The Jackal's false name is changed from Paul Oliever Duggan in the novel into Alexandra Duggan in the film, probably to make it easier to remember. In the film the Jackal

crashed his car, but not in the novel.

On 22 January 2003, I watch at the Japanese Film Festival in Bangkok the film *Juni Nin no Yasashī Nihonjin* the English title of which is *A Gentle Twelve*. It was made in 1991 by Nakahara Shun. Written by Mitani Koki of the Tokyo Sunshine Boys, the film is adapted from the *Original Nuance* also performed by the same group in Shinjuku. This film in many ways resembles *An Inspector Calls*. It is a story of twelve people of different professions who are called to act as a jury to decide whether a woman is guilty of murdering her divorced husband, or whether her pushing him towards the on-coming truck was an accident. The tension among the jurors keeps building up, then relaxes, and then builds up again until it reaches at times an almost unbearable level. All the various contradicting conference techniques in the unique style of Japan are shown in a greatly exaggerated proportion, and thus the amount of frustration resulted is hyperbolic. These techniques are namely Dango (mutual consent), Danmari (silence), Kakehiki (tactics) and Nemawashi (pre-acquisition of vote or consent). In the end the most seemingly virtuous among the jurors proves to be the most subjective and biased.

As Gandalf says to Frodo in Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, 'Many who live deserve death. Many of those who died deserve life. Can you give it to them? So do not be too hasty in passing your judgement on other people'.† In *An Inspector Calls*, Inspector Goole points out the sense of shared responsibility and the guilt of everybody, but he puts no one in jail and the real inspector never arrives on the scene. When the police tells Mr Birling over the phone that there is no Inspector Goole, the people in the room are divided into two groups, namely those who still retain the conscience and feel guilty and those who feel relieved. While those of the younger generation, for example Sheila and Eric, have wronged society and behaved badly, they are the one who are capable of feeling this sense of shared guilt. The adults, however, are too rigid in their attitudes to learn any lessons. One may say that it is mainly them who have driven Eva Smith to her suicide, but they seem on the surface to be very helpful and never feel the guilt themselves. The hope for the future lies only with the young. The Jury in Shun's film acts likewise, for in the end the verdict passed is that of 'not guilty'. The man is dead, and the evidence and witness are by no mean conclusive enough to justify the possible death penalty of his past wife. Shared guilt is the thing for the living not the dead. We can not bring the latter back to life, but we have to live with the past mistakes and must make sure that they are never repeated. Murders are a mistake, and we must learn from them through

† Compare, *Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man.* (John, 8: 15)

our sense of shared responsibility so that the same or similar thing shall never happen again. The *Original Nuance* seems to be influenced by Priestley's play.

There are several types of figures of speech or imagery, for example alliteration, assonance, metaphor, onomatopoeia, personification and simile. These are the more formal figures of speech. Others techniques are either informal or are used only in word-play, for example idiom, colloquialism, slang, swearing, blaspheming, spoonerism and malapropism. Spoonerism is the swapping of consonants. Malapropism is the use of wrong words. It is perhaps one of the easiest and wittiest among word-plays, sometimes too easy you do it unnoticed or without realising it. Half of the contents of the junk mails forwarded to you by your friend at the turn of the 3rd millennium are malapropisms I am sure, only one example of which is what I have recently received, '[Shakespeare] wrote tragedies, comedies, and hysterectomies, all in Islamic pentameter'. Another example is 'The hypothesis is the largest side of a triangle'.

A middle-aged woman teaches English in the evening to children younger than me and she says I could come along. Ritchie is doing 5th form and he also is here. So along I come quite a few times, and quite enjoy learning with her. But we do here only things necessary to pass the School Certificate, and it is unbelievable how the 5th form and the 6th form English can be so different. While the former is all Grammar, the latter is all Literature and Writing. I still prefer to read Shakespeare, poetry, and literature. It is either here or in my 6E1 class that I come across the word *ambidextrous*. Ten years from now I gradually become one.

In Art History, we learn among other things Egyptian and Greek Arts, Realism, Pointillism, expressionism, Surrealism, neoclassicism, cubism and Abstract Arts. We study works by Giovanni Bellini (*c.*1430 – 1516), William Blake (1757 – 1827), Jérôme Bosch (*c.*1450 – 1516), Sandro Filipepi Botticelli (1445 – 1510), François Boucher (1703 – 1770), Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475 – 1564), Paul Cézanne (1839 – 1906), François René Chateaubriand John Constable (1776 – 1837), Gustave Courbet (1819 – 1877), Salvador Dalí (1904 – 1989), Louis David (1748 – 1825), Leonardo da Vinci (1452 – 1519), Edgar Degas (1834 – 1917), Eugène Delacroix (1798 – 1863), Albrecht Dürer (1471 – 1528), Paul Gauguin (1848 – 1903), Giotto di Bondone (1266 – 1337), Jean Boulogne Giambologna (1529 – 1608), Francisco de Goya y Lucientes (1746 – 1828), El Greco (Dhomínikos Theotokópoulos, 1541 – 1614), Jean Auguste Ingres (1780 – 1867), Charles le Brun (1619 – 1690), Holbein (Hans) le Jeune (1497/ 98 – 1543), Édouard Manet (1832 – 1883), Henri Matisse (1869 – 1954), Claude Monet (1840 – 1926), Plabo Ruiz Picasso (1881 – 1973), Camille Pissarro (1830 – 1903), Raffaello Sanzio Raphaël (1483

– 1520), Auguste Renoir (1841 – 1919), Auguste Rodin (1840 – 1917), Petrus Paulus Rubens (1577 – 1640), Georges Seurat (1859 – 1891), Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864 – 1901), William Turner (1775 – 1851), Willem Van de Velde le Jeune (1633 – 1707), Anton van Dyck (1599 – 1641), Vincent van Gogh (1853 – 1890), Diego de Silva Velázquez (1599 – 1660), Examples of these are Rodin's *Le Baiser* (1886), Manet's *le Déjeuner sur l'herbe* (1862), Seurat's *Un dimanche après-midi à la Grande Jatte* (1884 – 85), Van Gogh's *l'Église d'Auvers-sur-Oise* (1890), Gauguin's *Femmes de Tahiti* (1891), Ingres' *La Grande Odalisque* (1814), Picasso's *Guernica* (1937), Giambologna's *The Kidnapping of a Sabine Woman* (1579 – 1583), Da Vinci's *Mona Lisa*, Michelangelo's frescos on the Sistine Chapel's ceiling, Cézanne's *Les Joueurs de cartes* (*c.*1890 – 1895), Delacroix's *La Liberté guidant le peuple* (1830), Dürer's *Mélancolie* (1514), David's *Les Sabines* (1799). We also learn about the Parthenon (447 – 432 BC), the Pantheon (built 27 BC, destroyed AD 80, restored by Publius Aelius Hadrianus (AD 76 – 138)), and the Doric, Ionic and Corinthian columns. Monet's *Impression, soleil levant* (1872) has given to his school the name *Impressionism.* The idea of a world within world can be seen in Courbet's *l'Atelier du peintre* (1855). This is the same theme and method as the one used in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Jostein Gaarder's *Sophie's World.*

William Shakespeare (1564 – 1616) lived during the reign of two monarchs, namely Elizabeth I (1533 – 1603, Queen of England 1558 – 1603) and James I (1566 – 1625, King of Scotland 1567 – 1603, James VI of England 1603 – 1625). Elizabeth I of England was childless and therefore was succeeded by James VI of Scotland upon her death in 1603 because he had some rights to the English throne. *Macbeth* is thought to have been written between 1603 and 1606. The first recorded performance was in Spring 1611, and the first Folio published in 1623. The theme about the legitimacy of succession to the throne may have been for political reason, considering the coronation of James I of England in 1603, the same year that Shakespeare began working on the play.

At the time of the second world war, New Zealanders used to speak very similarly to the English. But only a generation later they began to use their own accent, for example pronouncing *muwk* for *milk*, *skuwk* for *school*, and *aowps* for *Alps*. The *l* becomes very nearly *w*. This is because they try to open the mouth very little.

We have quite a few copies of the Reader's Digest in our house. Dad likes reading them. I only read some of them. I find that they are a little difficult for me. Now, I can not remember where I had seen or heard the following story from. It is said that when an Aussie comes to New Zealand he invariably laughs three times at any one of the Kiwi jokes he

hears. The first time is when everybody gets it, the second time a week later when he thinks he gets it, and the third and last time a couples of months later when another Kiwi finally tells him what it really means.

It is ideas, and not events, which shape history. Events are mere facts whereas ideas are the philosophy behind them. Events either occur intentionally or accidentally. If they are intentional then they come from some idea. Even unintentional events usually comes indirectly from certain ideas. For example, for a coup to fail there must be the intention to carry it out in the first place.

Our philosophy leads all our action. It shapes and guides our thoughts. Action is only an approximation of thoughts, and events are only approximations of action. It is our ideas that have divided the world into two opposing camps, that is the West and the Eastern Europe. Wars happen only because we follow different philosophers; they Karl Marx (1818 – 1883), and we the Greeks.

According to the theory of the percolation in networks, the property of each network is determined by its underlying structure and the interconnection among all its components. I maintain that these structures in physics are equivalent to the structures we find in social science. The structure of our society depends on things some examples of which are the level of the distribution of power, the importance one places on education and research, and whether one emphasises researches in pure science or in technology. In the percolation theory, the structure of a system determines its history. Events are only important if you look at them collectively not individually, and then again they are governed by statistics. On the other hand, the structure of the system determines the statistics that govern the events. An empire falls because it deviates from its robust self or structure. For example, the efficiency of its method of power distribution may be unable to catch up with its size when it has become larger. Such thing has happened to the Romans before. Another thing which often causes changes to occur is the change in the ideas in the offspring. When the new generation deviates from their ancestor in their idea and philosophy, the structure of the social system changes. But I know not why I should try to explain this to you. If we accept in the first place that ideas shape events, then even if all events shaped history the ideas would still shape both the history and the events that shape it.

On the other hand, events are history, and they are directly shaped by languages. In the first place, in order to make a war one would need to talk to each other to form a troop and to reason with members of it to convince them that they must attack the other party. But language is only the translation of ideas. It is the messenger of our self. So in the

end ideas still shape the history because they shape the language, which in turn shapes all the events, which in turn are equivalent to the history.

Yet on the other hand, history is written by historians in one language or another. Therefore you may say that it is historians who shape the history as we know it. These historians, however, are also a writer since they write the history that we read. Now, it is necessary and prerequisite that a writer must have some ideas no matter how well or absurd, and that their writings are but approximations of these ideas. Therefore historians, who shape the history, write the history that is shaped by their ideas. So in the end it is their ideas that shape the history or at least their version of it. *Quod erat demonstrandum.*

South-west of Ashburton, on the coast, is Timaru in which a family of my host family live. They are Hank, Carole, Allan, Linda and Tony who live in a lovely house. There is a living-room with thick carpet on which I lie down to play the computer games with Tony, who is younger than me, while a big aquarium stands towering behind us. Linda moves to Wellington to work. A few years after I have left New Zealand she is married and moves again to Singapore to work at the New Zealand Embassy there.

Weekend Star, Saturday 21 May 1983, has a picture of Steve Davis (b. 1957) with the magic cue in his hand crying over his own success. The Ashburton Guardian, Thursday 26 May 1983, shows a picture of students painting the T block at Ashburton College.

Art nowadays has changed a lot from what they were a century ago. Now we can see wherever we go, from countryside to big, noisy city, artists both professional and amateur sitting on the ground or standing in front of their easel sketching, drawing or painting. During the time of the Egyptian Empire, artists used to be under the power of the ruler. Their work had to be strictly in accord with the rules that were accepted. In Greek, artists became freer than they used to be. Their art became more and more imaginative, that which we know now as the Classical Art. They created their world the way they thought it should be not in the real world but in their legends. Long after the Greeks and the Romans lived, artists again began to put their own ideas into their arts, for example Leonardo da Vinci, Michaelangelo and Raphael. These people had made many discoveries that paved a large path for generations to come. Now artists may choose from the many ways open for them to choose, for they work for their own satisfaction not their patron's. There are, for example, experimental and abstract arts. We may divide artists today into three group: firstly, those who admire the Classical Art whose works look back to that period; secondly, those who draw typical pictures, for instance landscape and portrait; thirdly, those who still do experiments

on art find out their own artistic ways which often they themselves do not know where it will lead to.

We are going to go roller skating tomorrow, 28 May 1983. Tonight I am going up to Christchurch with Kelly and her host Dad, host sister and her friend. After tea Andi and Flana drive me to Kelly's place by the coast. None of us knew the way and we nearly lost our way. But we go by the map.

On our way to Christchurch we pass Rakaia. At the skate ring there are many people whom I know. There are Smith, Wayne, Nāuy, his Mom, Zainal from Malaysia, Adam and an AFS friend from Japan. Skating is fun but difficult because I have never done it before. At first I do some tests by sliding back and forth a few times just outside the ring. This done and feeling that I could get by, I get into the ring. I move very slowly along the rim first, and all seem well. But as people around me are moving faster than I am, I gradually go faster and faster. As the results, I fall down more than ten times. There is a break for some competition, but I only watch other people compete. We are at it for a few hours. On our way back I fall asleep most of the time. Back at Kelly's place I go straight back to my bed room. Instead of going to bed I read a book on Geology for a while. There are School Certificate exams coming up soon.

The following day is Sunday. I walk from the house out into the farm, until I reach the sea. After having taken some photos I try to walk back on tip-toe because I want to take some pictures of the sheep. I try not to frighten them, but they are frightened all the same. May be it is because the red jacket I wear. Kelly has three sisters in her host family, that is Nikki, Joan and Mandi. Joan can tap-dance. Everyone here studies or had studied at Ashburton College. Kelly is also doing the Sixth Form at school, but she is in 601 while I am in 602.

Kelly's host parents are Kelwyn and Barbara. They live in a place called Dorie. Kelwyn shows me his farm. From him I learn that wheat feeds people but oats are for the sheep. And electrified fence cuts across the field of oats, separating fresh fields from the grazing sheep. Break feeding works by gradually withdrawing this fence away from the sheep into the oats. In this case the fence moves towards the sea. He has altogether at least three saloons, two tractors, four motorcycles, one harvester, one boat, one truck, a petrol station and an aeroplane. Farmers here are usually rich people. I can not help but envy Kelly sometimes that she could live with such a rich family as this where there seems to be no lackings of anything. I help him swapping tyres. These are exchanged diagonally in pairs, between the front left and the back right ones as well as between the front right and the back left. He does all this in his own

workshop. Like shoes, the two sides of a tyre often wear out unequally. In this case the inner sides has worn out more.

And here there is a billiard table. I have a go at it with Kelly. She tells me that in the US the high school lasts four years, and is easier than in New Zealand. In Thailand there are six years. Similarly in New Zealand there are also six years, up to the sixth form that is. The Seventh Form is more like a first year at the university, and is done only by those who intend to attend the latter. The six years of both Thai and New Zealand schools are divided into two parts, 3–3 in the former and 2–4 in the latter. So high school can be said to start from the M4 in Thailand or from 3rd Form in New Zealand.

Form 5 students study for School Certificate, Form 6 for Sixth Form Certificate and University Entrance while Form 7 students study for UB and US which are probably University Bursaries and University Scholarships respectively. The University Entrance Board looks after the latter three of these, that is the UE, UB and US. Subjects in examinations are English, Accounting, Applied Maths, Biology, Chemistry, Classical Studies, Economics, French, Geography, German, Greek, History, History of Art, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Latin, Maori, Mathematics, Music, Physics, Practical Art, Pure Mathematics, Russian, Spanish and Technical Drawing. Most but not all of these subjects are available for all the three exams, for example Pure Mathematics is possible only in the cases of UB and US, not UE.

Lion has beaten Bay of Plenty at 34-16 and Manawatu at 25-18. On 31 May there is a rugby match between the British Isles, aka Lion, and Mid-Canterbury at Ashburton Showgrounds. A ticket for student costs one dollar. The Lion takes the lead during the first half at 10-6, and goes on to win the match at 23-6. With plenty of gap in the score it is a boring match.

For the Second Term I have a violin lesson on 30/5 at 10:20, 13/6 11:20, 20/6 9:00, 4/7 9:40, 18/7 10:00, 25/7 10:20, 1/8 11:20, and 8/8 9:00. Holidays are on 6 June, Queen's Birthday, and 7 July, Mid-term Break.

School is closed one week for exams from Wednesday 1 until 8 June. On Saturday Grandma takes me to see a boat race on Rakaia River. She is Mum's mother while Dad's mother is Nana to us. The race starts from Rakaia coming upstream to Methven where there is a break for lunch and then go downstream back to Rakaia again. I feel no anticipation for the results, however, since I do not know any of the participating racers.

We sit in the car while Grandma drives to Methven. I ask her a few times to stop the car to take picture. The film runs out while we are watching the race. She takes me to Mt. Hutt Hotel Lodge but

they have no 135-24 films there, so that is the end of photography for today, which is rather fortunate since otherwise there would have been more pictures of nothing but the boat racing. I am taking a lot of pictures because I plan to have them printed together in proof-sheets each of which contains perhaps thirty pictures in the actual small size they appear on the negatives. I have seen these proofs at Professor Jone's place. He explained to me that you select from the proofs only good pictures to enlarge, the rest of them you leave alone. He said good humouredly, 'The secret of taking good pictures is to take lots of pictures and then choose the best ones'. I do not think I agree. I am rather meticulous when it comes to taking pictures. I want all of the pictures that I take to be good enough for anything. This is of course a tall order, so I am always disappointed.

Mum has joined a local Maori dance group. She dresses up in traditional costume and performs a graceful dance using the poi balls.

A poi ball is a ball pendulum hanging from a woolen bobbin and used in Maori dances as accompaniment to the singing. One is held in each hand and swung about, a graceful sight to see. It is made by braiding strands of wool together in black, white and red. The loose end of the braid is then tied up and gathered into a ball. Then you make thick layers of tissue paper and wrap these around the ball and tie it with a woolen strand.

Friday 10 June I give a letter that Mum has written to Mr. Mathias and he signs on it, which means that I can leave the school at 11 am today to attend an AFS function and a Maori afternoon in Christchurch.

In the afternoon I go to Hga Hau e wha Marae. It is a Maori place that is currently being built. There are two important buildings. The first one is for living and sleeping in while the second and larger one for eating and dining. Formerly there used to be only one building, that is the first one. The second building has been added later to be used as a dining hall. Inside there are wooden carvings. These are divided into two types, that is those which are painted red and those which are unpainted. The Maori builders tell us that we may not take pictures of the unpainted carvings, and that no women are allowed inside the unfinished building. Maoris believe that a house being built is like a child getting born. A building has an end wall as its mouth, side walls as arms, a big pole standing in the middle as its heart which supports a long beam that runs the whole length of the building and represents its backbone or spine. Running from the backbone to each side are rafters to support the roof and acts as ribs for the building.

A building undergoing construction is like an infant, a virgin. Neither women may enter nor photographs taken, because these would blemish

the baby. Both of these things are possible once the building is completed.

The morning of the following day we visit a dairy factory and milk treatments in Christchurch, and go to a multinational party in the evening. At the party there are people from many different nations across the world. This year there are many Thais, especially so Khảmẹ̣r refugees who come from Thailand. Some have already been here for quite a while, others only a few years. All are friendly. After food there are performances from various nations. Khảmẹ̣r people's dances are similar to Ramḍaiy (Thai dance). Dancing with them is enjoyable. After the shows is the supper after which we come back.

In the afternoon before going to the party we ice-skated at a skating ring in Cashmere. Coming back we visit Jo, a Thai student who studies at Cashmere High School where Nāuy attends. It is so exhausting to bike up the hill. The ticket for the ice skating costs $ 2.50.

On Sunday at about 11 am Scott say that we should go and do some hydro-sliding. So three of us, that is Scott, Nāuy and I go. The Hydro-slide is at the Elizabeth II Sport Centre which was built in 1974 for the British Commonwealth Sport that used to be organised every four years, similar to the Olympics but with a two year difference between each other. The Sport Hall here is very large. There is a stadium for football matches and athletics, a swimming pool, a spring board, a diving platform approximately 15 metres high, a fifty metre swimming pool, a hydro slide, a squash court, *etc.*

Quite a few AFS students want to change to another host family. Sainal from Malaysia had breached a rule set up by AFS and only got away with it because of the help from the Malaysian Embassy. He hitch-hiked from Dunedin because he did not like his family. When AFS learnt about his hitch-hiking they want to send him back, but he asked the consul of Malaysia to intervene and thereby could move to Christchurch. I am not as lucky when it comes to my turn to have problems with some member of my host family. In my case I ask a counsellor. Then there are a few talks, some crying, and in the end I stay with my present family. Determination is never one of my better traits. That is the matter with me. I have noticed that every time I become resolute enough to effect a change, things always get better. All the people I know who changed their family fare better now.

Another student from Sri Lanka was sent back after he was caught stealing a book worth less than a dollar. The shop called the police, and when AFS learnt about it he was sent home. Relationship problems may not be a folly, but stealing is. It is one of those worser follies that one is better off without. It is true love too is a folly. But one'd rather be in

than without it.

The ticket to get into the sport stadium costs $ 3.50. Scott offers to pay for the three of us. One dollar is for the swimming pool. The remaining $ 2.50 is for half an hour on the hydro slide. Yes, half an hour and for each person it is timed. Within that half-hour I could play a little over ten times. I meet one girl while busy playing the hydro slide. She is so cute my heart leaps and bounds when my eyes fall on hers. Upon asking, she is only twelve going on thirteen and is studying Form 2. Of course nothing comes of it.

At night we watch the film Omen II. As I write this on the television On 2 is showing the Square Peg.

Father sent a letter dated 3th June 1983 together with a draft of $ 210 to me. The brass band of my school in Thailand, Montfort College, has just won First in the national competition. I used to play the trumpet in that marching band two years ago and still know almost everyone there. Many of my friends are still playing. A few of them were in my class 401 last year, which means that they must be now in 501. They perform superbly well and will go on to win First in an international competition for school marching bands in Netherlands for a few years in a row.

There have not always been peace between pakehas and Maoris. Since Captain Cook came here in 1769 English settlers had exploited the indigenous people and their land. Then the Treaty of Waitangi came as a surprise in 1840. But treaty or no, there were warfares going on all the time between the two parties. The Treaty was always broken on the settlers side, which resulted in land wars the worst period of which was during 1863 to 1872. In 1863 war broke out in Tataraimaka and Waikato which led to the battle of Orakau Pa in 1864. During 1867–68 nine of the ten British regiments withdrew from New Zealand. The tenth and last one went away in January 1870. The land wars ended not because no more lands were taken from the Maoris but because the newer generation of Maoris changed their life style and adapted to the new society. The Constitutional Act of 1852 gives the Maori people full political rights.

Ashburton College Executive organises Time Warp, a school dancing in fancy dresses, on Wednesday 15 June 1983 from 7:30 to 11:00 pm. The ticket costs $ 2.50. Those who come dress in either ancient or futuristic costumes. You shall never could get in unless you first dress yourself up properly, or improperly for that matter, which in most cases seem to be the case in the usual sense of the words. I dress in my national dress of Lanna, now a part of Thailand, slack cotton shirts and trousers in very dark blue (jud Maûhaûm). Mat is here too. He has on what I guess must be a national dress of Malaysia. Not two unimaginative people already!

I listen to Michael Jackson's newly released *Beat It* but could not

catch a word apart from what is the title of the song, so I ask Philip my classmate to help. The song is interesting because even the title already contains a contrast between what it expresses and the meaning of each of the words it contains. The second verse is what one could say *deliciously written*,

> They're out to get you, better move while you can.
> Don't wanna be a part; you wanna be a man.
> You wanna stay alive, better do what you can;
> so beat it. Just beat it. (uh!) [sic]

The song plays with the meanings of the words by switching back and forth between the meaning of *beat it* as an expression and and as a phrase comprising *beat* and *it*. By doing it this way he effects subtle changes in the mood of the song. And indeed, 'Don't wanna be no part; you wanna be a man'! Another thing is a contrast between two different meanings of the same word, namely *fair* which means *just* and also could mean *beautiful*. This word appears in the line, 'But you wanna be fair, just beat it ...'. Shakespeare also plays with the same word in a similar fashion when makes one of the witches in Macbeth say, 'Fair is foul and foul is fair ...' .

The World Safari is back again, in a theatre near you. The world seems to enjoy watching two nomads make a fool of themselves and let others know about it. Just what I need. Today is a school workday of Form 6. Coming back from doing some gardening at Mr. Reeves's place on Graham Street in Tinwald, passing downtown, I see the actual car used in the film. It is on its tour around New Zealand, having been borrowed from a museum in Australia. I take a picture of it, but it is a little against the light. Ashburton is the only place that asks for such a replay of the film. I do not know whether we should be proud, but the car is a Daf 33 in case that would ring any bell.

I will have taken over thirty rolls of film in all during my time in New Zealand as an AFS student. To save money, I only have them developed here and plan to get all of them printed in Thailand. I have those films taken on the Milford Track printed at a shop in Bangkok's Chinatown, and they come out in perfectly rich colours. Unfortunately I have the rest printed in Jiangmhăi, at a shop in the middle of the town not far from where the monument of the three kings is today. The quality of these latter is shockingly bad. Ironically for me it is an impossible transition when I go back from New Zealand to Thailand. I never admit this until it is too late. We are a sample family and I will never say I can not adjust back to the life in my home country. That would be blasphemy verging on to profanity and I am patriotic. To have thought Ashburton College

as a place which nurtures the mind while Thai schools a factory for producing physicians would have been unthinkable. If there is anything I can do about it, then I never know them. One day when I am so worried with the certainty of the future I throw all the films and more than half of the pictures away.

I thought I liked basketball so I join a team with other kids at school. We call it Raiders. There is a subscription fee of $ 3. At other times it could take a while the process of disillusion, but in this case it takes less. One afternoon we play another team and lost by more than 60 to nil, nothing unusual for us as soon it will prove to be. During my school exchange week when I am in Christchurch I play in another better team where I am the worst player. Then I watch on as my team dogfights it with the other team as a profoundly equal. I, however, can do nothing apart from watching.

I go with the Physical Education classes to Mount Hutt on 4 August to ski. We meet in the car park at school. I arrive very early in the morning, but we have to wait longer for those who have not yet come with the school buses. There are students who have to spend two hours on the bus to come to school. This is a cold morning which later turns out to be a clear day. When everybody has arrived, we all get into a bus. It takes us less than two hours to go to the ski field. At places along the way the road becomes quite steep, at places winding. Mt. Hutt gives a good view of the Canterbury plane below, a good contrast to itself. When we arrive, whatever we do not have we have to hire. I hire everything.

I have never skied before, so I learn how to form the skis into a v-shaped wedge and how to turn slowly by varying the pressure applied by both feet. This is already fun, I enjoy the physics involved. Then I look up and see everyone skiing down the intermediate face of the slopes and it does not at all seem to be difficult. So I walk to the beginning of the cable lines, pull one, put the seat between my legs and let it pull me up until I reach the top of a slope to where I had wanted to come. From up here it suddenly looks less easy, as though this was a completely different slope to the one I had looked at before. I suddenly feel that the slope is too steep, that I will be able to control my gears to make it do nothing except leading me headlong in the quickest way possible downwards. The sense of control that I had felt when I began to understand how the wedge-shaped skis work has been dissipated totally by now. There is only one idea in my head, and that is I will not be able to get down from here unshakened.

Still having my skis on I begin to go down slowly. I cross horizontally in one direction. Then I gain some speed and feel unsafe for I am fast

approaching the far end still not knowing how to turn the blessed thing around and make it lead me in the opposite direction. Only one thing seems to me to be possible in the immediate future. If I can not turn, then at least I could veer slightly upwards while carrying on in the same direction in order to reduce the speed lest I should hit the side of the slope in full momentum and either fall off the mountain or hit a tree. 'It works!', I gleefully encourage myself. My speed decreases gradually until I finally come to a stop and would soon be going backwards the way I came, which is exactly what I want. But I would then be going with my back first, which is not not at all what I want. I know I should go onwards, but that is already out of question for I have by now reached the very rim. So I lay myself down on the snow, lift both feet up and put them down again with the skis in the position I want them to be, and then get up and go. This is not the proper thing to do and I dread doing it again. Therefore the second time I try to turn around with the wedge, having gained some confidence from having done my first turn on this slope which proves that the quest is not impossible, even though it could be a little awkward and slow.

The wedge method proves unsuccessful at first. I fly down headlong and could do nothing except laying myself down again. This time I have to climb down twenty feet to retrieve one of the skis which happened to break loose. The second wedge proves a little better in that I can control my feet such that the skis would not detach themselves from my ski boots, or even if they did they would not go on their own as far. Yet the third wedge proves that the method is feasible for I now manage to turn. Mid way down the slope a classmate of mine passes me by, then stops and climbs up to where I am standing, right in the middle of the slope and out of breath. With her encouragement, and by trying to mimic her relaxedness on the thing, I soon manage to reach the foot of the slope with only a little over ten times of falling altogether. We ski until it begins to get dark and we are told to make it a day. Once the last ray of the sun is gone from the face of the slope, the chill creeps in quickly in its place and I suddenly get cramps in my legs. I board the bus slightly battered, blistered, cramped, but limping along in good spirit. I have fallen down perhaps a hundred times over, but the ski trip has certainly been enjoyable and a good experience.

This year's Senior Ball is to be held on Friday 19 August 1983, from 8 pm until 1 am. Karyn asks me if I want to go there with her, but I say to her that I do not think dad would let me. So she asks Simon and finally go with him instead. Andy talks one night at the table about the Ball. Mum thinks I should go and Dad agrees, but I think it is too late to tell Catherine that now. I want to go with Wendy, so I ask her when I

see her whether she would like to go to the Senior Ball with me. But she decline, saying that she is already going with someone else. Donna was with Wendy and she heard me asking her. One night she came around to our place in her car and ask dad whether she could take me to the Ball. In the end she picks me up for the Senior Ball, which is held in Sportmans Lounge, Ashburton Racecourse, and drops me off afterwards. It is the first time I dance with a girl and I do not know what to do. But it is a memorable night.

Ashburton may be a small town, but when the regional AFS director for South East Asia and the Pacific comes to New Zealand it is the first place she comes to visit. The town has just formed its own chapter which will be in operation next year when I will have already gone away. The American Field Services or American Ambulance Field Services which was formed during Second World War is now American Field Scholar, exchanging high school students all over the world. China has recently accepted the program and there is now an exchange of youth leaders between the US and Russia. The program works well towards a more understanding and peaceful world. It creates a chain reaction of good faith and friendship. Take for example my host sister Andy who spent last year in Thailand. This year her family hosts me. My classmate now at Ashburton College, Philip, is going to Thailand next year. The new Ashburton Chapter could come into being probably because of Mark who is going to be its first president. He had been an AFS student to the US. He and Andy know each other and I have learnt that he has been working as a manager of two different companies one of which is Woolworths. Apart from AFS, New Zealand also has an Internal Agriculture Exchange Association programme whose students are paid while they spend their time here. The year 1985 is going to be an International Year of the Youth.

An Ashburton Guardian of 15 September 1983 has a column by Linda Clarke promoting the new AFS chapter together with a picture of me, Mark and Kelly.

There is a very strong wind on 21 September 1983. The north-westerly gale exceeds 50 knots at times, according to the Ashburton Guardian. I have to lean myself forwards at an awkward angle when I walk home for lunch from school, going against the wind. My body becomes nearly level. I put my arms slightly forwards to touch the ground, to get a hold the same way you do when climbing up the steep face of a hill. At approximately the same time the glass window in the Netherby Bookshop was blown in. I see a few sheets of corrugated iron flying through the air like pieces of paper. Trees are uprooted everywhere, a eucalyptus tree blown over in Oak Grove. Farm buildings are flattened. In Methven,

northeast of Manchester, there was a power cut this morning which resulted from burnt conductors after lines had crashed together. Power supplies were interrupted in Lyndhurst, Montalto and Hinds when three power poles broke down. With the average wind speed of between 60 and 70 kph (48 knots) the gusts have been described meteorologically as a severe gale, the result of an active front that crossed the Tasman yesterday afternoon. The Winchmore Irrigation Research Station recorded a wind of 57 knots or 106 kilometres per hour at 10:40. After lunch, walking back to the school I simply lean myself backwards more than forty-five degree, cushioned in the arms of the wind and let it carries me forwards. My feet merely touches the ground, guiding the direction and checking the movements to prevent myself from flying forwards too fast.

The gale comes during the Term Exams which lasts from 20 to 27 September and are for Sixth Form Certificate from the school. These exams will decide whether on not one would receive accrediting, necessary in order to be qualified to sit the UE exams in November. Therefore many students are studying hard. I have five exams to sit. English is quite difficult for me. One day before the exam I study with Mrs. Hill at Tutangata English Night Class. She tells me how to prepare for Macbeth. She says that I should understand the whole story, then prepare a few quotes. For poems I should choose one poet among those whose poems I have learnt. I choose James K. Baxter. Then I study three poems that he wrote, then find out the objective and summarise each one of them.

According to Mr. Lonsdale 30% will be for language while the rest, *i.e.* 70% will be for novel, poetry, Shakespeare, film and literature.

In the exam on Geology one is given four samples, three of which are rocks while one of them is a mineral, and then asked to write for each one a short description and the name. Then one is asked to find the epicentre of an earthquake. There is also a section of multiple choice questions.

For Mathematics the exam is divided into three parts. I like doing exams back to front, so I do the last section first, that is the five big- and the five small problems. Then I do the 20 multiple choice questions.

In Music I complete the left-hand part for the piano, indicating all the chords. Another thing is to write a tune for brass instruments in basically eight bars, which I could not finish in time. For analysis one must choose to analyse one composer, for example Hindemith, Lilburn, Brahms, *etc.*

In Art History there are five questions the first and the fifth of which are compulsory while the rest are left to one's choice. Nine plates of paintings are given which may be used to aid the answering. The last

question is on Seurat's *Grande Jatte.*

On Wednesday 21 September I have exams for English in the morning and Geology in the afternoon, on Monday 26th Mathematics morning and Music afternoon, and on Tuesday 27th only Art History in the morning.

For the only reason that its name starts with an *A*, Ashburton College sits among those at the head of the list of Universities Entrance Board Examination Centres. It is numbered 5, and only Akaroa, Alexandra, Amuri and Aotea come ahead of it. Even Auckland, the largest city in New Zealand, and Auckland South come after it, that is to say, at number 6 and 7 respectively. Place names of New Zealand are in either Maori or English. According to the same list, there are no Maori names of places that begin with letters *B, C, D, E, F, G, I, J, L, Q, S* and *U*. Another rule of thumb that I have arrived at is that, if a place name begins with *K, O, R, T* or *W*, there is a good chance that it will be a Maori word. There are overseas examination centres in Fiji Islands, Apia, Tonga and Cook Islands.

For a *6:th* Form student in New Zealand, after all the SFC and the UE exams are gone there is no more studying to do. Third Term exams, if they exist, are of no consequences whatsoever.

The Ashburton Tramping Club organises a trip to Arthur's Pass. There are altogether eight people coming. Apart from myself there are Leon and Sue Pasco, Sue McPike, Margaret Troh, Darryl, Alister and Ross. We set off from Ashburton on Friday 23 at 7 pm and reach Arthur's Pass around half past nine. Because we travel during the night, I could not see anything along the way. Ideally I would have preferred that we travelled during the day, because then one could see the scenery and the countryside along the way. It starts to rain when we arrive. There is no time to light the fire. Anyhow we are going to bed, and it is not that very cold.

The following day is Saturday 24 September. In the morning we walk to a shop not far from the place where we stay. I buy a book about Arthur's Pass National Park, which costs $ 2.50. Then we tramp to Devils Punchbowl Falls, and then go back to our lodging to have lunch. In the afternoon everyone is tired and sleepy, at first no one wants to go outside. But in the end I go out with Darryl, Sue McPike and Margaret. We climb up to Mt. Cassidy Ski Field which is a small ski field not as big as Mt. Hutt's. But it is more attractive because there are less people. There are only about ten people around. Along the way here while we were walking there was snow as thick as half a metre in some places. The boots that I have brought along with me belong to Ritchie and is rather too small, so I only have on my feet the pair of shoes that I wear to school.

We are back at around half past six or nearly seven. Alister is waiting for us with his Toyota, saying he is worried because we have been too long.

For Sunday 25th we had planned to climb up to Avalanche Peak, but unfortunately there has been heavy snow since very early in the morning. There is at least five or six inches of snow down here in a valley. We will learn later that it also snows in Ashburton for the first time today. We stay inside, go outside briefly for a walk and then come back because it is very cold. While we were outside, I saw a long machine with caterpillar wheels trying to clear the snow away from the road. It worked from the east and travelled westwards, leaving a cleared road behind and heading against a wall of snow so thick you never could tell where the road was. The snow does not seem to lessen, and we think we may still have to remain here another day.

We stay in a hut the ceiling of which is about thirty feet above the floor. There is a loft where there are several double-decked beds. I think you call these a bunk bed not a double-decker, because that is a bus though we do not have it here in NZ. There is a fire place in the middle of the living room which is spacious and above which there is no lofts. The side walls towards the road are made up of large panes of glass, from waist level up to the ceiling. It was very cold when we woke up and first came down to the living room. But now it is warm and cozy because of the fire that is blazing in the fire place. I like looking at the snow in the world outside and on the glass where it melts away in the middle of the pane, leaving only those parts along the frame covered. Several Keas jump around on the ground and on the window sills outside. They are native birds that are not afraid of human.

The forests in this area are called Beeches because the trees here are mostly beeches. This is a typically indigenous New Zealand forest.

In the afternoon the snow stops. The road has been cleared once and the newly fallen snow could not cover it out of sight. So we head back at around 5 pm and find ourselves in Ashburton at 7. Alister drops me off at home. Mum gives him $ 15 for my trip. On the way to Arthur's Pass we went via Lake Coleridge and Lake Lyndon. We came back via Sheffield-Darfield and then hit the Christchurch-Ashburton road.

I always keep diary only of big, memorable events. Examination is one of them because I am always very nervous preparing for one, and no less so doing it. When I tried to memorise lines in *Macbeth*, I used to go downtown to walk around our only shopping area. You traverse the whole place in no time on foot. But I managed to find a few seats in various places. I would sit in one and then move to another and another, and so on, all the while reciting lines from the play only some of which

are the following.

> Double, double toil and trouble;
> Fire, burn; and, caldron, bubble.

Exam time. Or indeed the following, which sounds better in the film than when you read it in the book.

> The weird sisters, hand in hand,
> Posters of the sea and land,
> Thus do go about, about:
> Thrice to thine, and thrice to mine,
> And thrice again, to make up nine:—
> Peace! — the charm's wound up.

These examples are only for fun and relaxing. The more important ones you probably already know. Wonder where my diary is. Oh, yes!

> Exam Week Last week (start from Wednesday to Wednesday) we've got a really good event at school. Ha! It was exam ...a lot of them ...tons of them. That make me feel *so* sick. How come I am going to be survived from this bloody week, I thought on that Tuesday night just exactly the one before the 'xam. I can remember very well about that night .... Oh! what a lovely night when I just had a look at my school work (Math + Geology → On Wednesday) and it was nearly 10.30 when I realized that I had not done any swotting for both of them! It was too late; so go to bed, make your mind and body in pretty good state and then get up early and go to sit the exam *and* prepare your mind for what you will get for the result.
>
> After Wednesday there was not any exam until Monday and Tuesday and that was too long and make me nervous. So I went to Arthur's Pass to do some swotting there (it's true, please believe) and nearly couldn't get back to exam because of snow. But anyway I was there at school on Monday and Tuesday sitting 3 exams :– Eng., Music, Art Hist. I really want to carry on telling this story but it is late at night now, and feeling very sleepy. So, Bye....

The results from my Sixth Form Certificate exams have come out and are not too bad. I got for English 32/80, for Music 23/60 in written part and 26/40 in oral, for Geology 69/100, for Maths 82.5/100 and for Art History 45.5/110.

At this time of the year the South Island and Ashburton are having their first snow. It's snow particularly heavy at Arthur's Pass. There is going to be a tramping trip there this weekend, organised by the school. It will probably be cancelled unless the weather improves.

School Exchange Week is being held during the period 17–21 October. I go to Christchurch on Saturday, which is today. At first the Ashburton Tramping Club was supposed to be going to Wilberforce for a tramping program it organised. But Dad said that it may rain on Sunday, which is tomorrow, and if it rains we would not be able to cross the river. So we have cancelled that tramping program and go to Christchurch instead.

Staying with another family here, I am attending a school in Christchurch for the whole of this week. I will study at the Christchurch Boy's High School. It is Monday today, the first day at school. Michael, whom I also call Dad, takes me to school and to see the head master. Then he takes me to see Paul.

During my first three days at the school I have not studied very well because unfortunately, or fortunately, there is an exhibition being held at the town hall. It is called Science Fair, so Keith and I go there together. Keith is supposed to be my mate and counsellor. He introduces me to three students from Auckland, that is David, Peter and Scott. On the fourth day I talk to some 3rd Form kids in front of a class. They are learning about Malaysia in their Geography lessons. During the lunch time I visit the Malaysian students, David and Solomon, in their flat where they live with three other students from Malaysia. In the afternoon I talk to two more classes of third-formers.

On the last day, that is Friday, I attend classes period after period. I visit the Malaysian students' flat again at lunch time, and have some rice together with David and Keith. The family with whom I am staying here has four members, Michael, Caroline, Kate, John and Liz. They have a dog they call Hiccup.

Keith like playing basketball and he is very good at it despite the fact that he is shorter than me and I am only six foot nine. One night we play in a gymnasium so large there must be at least four games going on at the same time. We form an ad hoc team all the members of which are better as a player than I am. We do very well on the whole, I doing nothing else apart from passing the ball. Whether we win is of less consequence, it is a close match. With Raiders I was a player and we did badly. Now even as I play I am merely a spectator, but we are doing well. Some people would think this is good, but I do not like team sports for the same reason.

November is full of events at school. On Wednesday 2nd there is a 6th Form maths test and on the 9th Senior Prize Giving. I receive a minor, nondescript prize called the Certificate of Citizenship. School Certificate Examinations begin on Wednesday 16th.

The school orchestra plays on the Senior Prize Giving. I plays the second violin. I also have a part-time job at a Chinese fish 'n chips shop,

chucking spuds into a potato peeler machine. The shop belongs to Mr. King whom I met one evening at the swimming pool where both Dad and Mum are coaches. It is called Snowdrop Restaurant, opposite the railway station. Despite the name, it is only a fast food shop with only a counter and no tables. Sometimes when there are dimples in the potatoes you need to use a knife. On such occasion the evening of the day before the concert I accidentally cut my left index finger with the potato knife. During the concert my index finger bleeds whenever I press it on the strings, and soon even when I leave it alone, worsening my already bad playing.

A highlight of the concert that evening is Russell who is also in my class of Sixth Form music where he also has a leading performance. He plays the bassoon and on this occasion a piece has been chosen such that he can solo, which he did marvellously well. He is a natural player here in so much as he is a natural composer in our class.

Russell is very proud of his family name which he says goes back to the 14^{th} century as one record goes, 'Bote the Flemmynge that woneth in the west syde of Wales', in exclusively roman alphabet. He was born in England in 1967 to English parents. They came over in a ship during 1969–70 on a trip which took six weeks, and has ever since been living in Ashburton. They think that with a population of 14,000 Ashburton is about an ideal place to live in. He said he wants to study Music at a university and he plans to do some research on the music of South East Asia, in particular Thailand. If he does, I am sure he will succeed where M. Gaston has failed.

At school there is some problem of students sniffing solvents. I have never come across one, but I know such problem exists because it was written in a leaflet given to parents.

Mr. King must have lived here for more than twenty years. I found a piece of old newspaper in his shop the Snowdrop Restaurant, dated Wednesday, June 14, 1967 [sic] which depicts a Vietnamese father carrying his wounded son to an evacuation helicopter after a Viet Cong's attack of Thuan Nhon, a village 15 miles west of Can Tho. The currency in use at that time seems to be British but on the process of changing into dollar and cent. The net weights are given in ounce, the prices in shilling and old pence, but there are also prices in cent written in small letters placed under these. This indicates that the currency is going to be changed. The double pricing in two different currencies is order to make this change a gradual one. Advertisements in the Christchurch Star, Tues., June 13, 1967 [sic] shows Woolworths Supermarkets advertising Lux soap at 2 for 2′3 (two shilling and three old pence) or 22c, Brown & Polson wheat corn flour 1 lb. for 2′4 or 23c, Wattie's four

varieties of canned roast beef and gravy at 3′11 ea. or 39c, it also says *TV dinner, ready to heat* and *ready to eat.* Apart from these there are also Highlander Sweetened, Condensed Milk, 14 oz. for 1′10$\frac{1}{2}$ or 19c and Wattie's Sliced Peaches, 16 oz. at 2′3 or 22c. Also the dates are written in what is now considered as American instead of English, that is to say,

As AFS students we are ambassadors to our respective countries. Our experience abroad is a valuable one which continues to influence us long after it has ceased. James hopes that I will be able to perform a *haka* to my folks at home. But since Haka is a war dance, and the line is long, he teaches me some greeting words instead.

> Tena ra koutou katoa
> Haere mai e nga ...
> Haere mai e nga iwi,
> Tena ra koutou katoa!

It is a greeting and welcome to all, which he says he himself would never be able to remember. So he writes it down and give it to me. 'And if you ever get stuck doing a haka,' he said, 'make it up!'

James plans to start a software house called Kiwis, supplying BBC programs. He thinks I am lucky because I have already dropped Physics, and David agrees with him. I have not told them that the reason that I switched from Physics to Geology was not because of Mr. Curry's teaching but because Physics is always taught at schools in Thailand whereas no Geology classes exist there. Nor have I told them that in my country all children have to study the same things disregarding their interests. James is also quite philosophical for he used to say that life is a yoyo, we are not alone in our universe, and each of us probably has approximately $ 2 worth of chemical in him.

Karen, on the other hand, lives in this world. As I have told her that I have a nephew back home, so she says she also has a nephew, two nieces and one step-niece. She expects to be an auntie for the fifth time soon. She likes swimming and travelling, so she enjoy going away with a team to a competition for a day. She trains everyday in a heated, covered pool.

Rebecca is in my music class. She also studies Geology with me. In fact I like sitting next to her in the class because then I could look at her lecture notes. She takes wonderful notes which greatly help me catch up with the class because sometimes I can not understand everything Mr. Vallender says.

Bronwyn is one among the six children in her family. She has two elder and two younger brothers and one sister, elder. Her Dad was from North Island and teaching at a primary school in Marlborough when he

met her Mum who is originally from there. He is now the principal of a primary school in Ashburton. She wants to teach in a primary school, but has not yet been accepted at a teacher's college, so she may try again. She likes word games, for example she says, 'Never B♯. Sometimes B♭'. Always B♮. It is only a pity that I never keep in touch with any of my friends after I return to Thailand.

Robert Burns (1759 – 1796) has said something very touching on this issue, but which I have not yet heard of in full. Anyway, how could one expect a child like me understand this kind of thing? The following is what he says.

> Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
> And never brocht to mir'?
> Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
> And days o' auld lang syne.
>
> We twa ha'e ran a boot the braes,
> And pu'd the growans fine,
> We've wandered mony a weary fit,
> Sin' auld lang syne.
>
> We twa ha'e paid'lt in the burn,
> Frae mornin' sun till dine,
> But seas between us braid ha'e roar'd,
> Sin' auld lang syne.
>
> And there's a hand, my trusty freen,
> An' gi'es a hand o' thine,
> We'll tak aright gude wille wacht,
> For auld lang syne.
>
> For auld lang syne, my dear,
> For auld lang syne,
> We'll tak' a cup o' kindness yet,
> For auld lang syne.

Kathleen has five sisters, Mary, Deirdre, Sarah, Teresa and Richeal, who live with her at her home in Rakaia. They have four horses and seven cats. Hers is called Smudgy who is a fat, ginger and white cat.

Carol is also in my class. She wants to become a primary school teacher because she says teachers are well paid.

Sox's name is Chris but we call him Sox all the same, and that is what he likes too. I do not have to tell you that he likes AC-DC for that is written all over his face. He wants to become a Systems Analyst. He is sixteen, and has done athletics since he was five as well as rugby since he was six. He had been among the New Zealand Secondary Schools

Athletic Team that went to Brisbane, Australia. Undoubtedly many think his constitution is crazy, but I think I know better for he one day he said to me, 'He who waitith will get what he wantith so long as he workith like hellith while he waitith'. You can hardly see even a slight trace of derangement when he says this, but then again he has to conclude everything with, 'AC-DC rule undoubtedly'. He does not like Maths because Chris has already does.

Chris is also in our Maths class, as you probably known. He was born in Auckland to a traffic officer who seven years later moved to Wesport on the West Coast of South Island, which is known as Wet Coast for the amount of rain it gets. They had some rough time there before his Dad decided to shift to Ashburton, probably another reason why Sox, his best friend, suggests that I visit West Coast, saying it is a great country. Chris likes oysters on cheese on toasts, baked in an oven for five minutes or until brown, dripping and crispy. He plays rugby, softball and golf but the best of all is softball, he said. He likes girls and suggests that I keep my head up and look for the right one. I never knows what he is talking about. Coming on seventeen, I still do not know what to do to your wife when you marry. But you can not admit such shameful fact to Chris at my age. Without doubt I eye girls and know exactly how to make them melt in my arms.

There are altogether seventeen classes of Sixth Form, each with thirty students. Mine is 602, Julianne's 612. She likes skiing, tramping, ice- and roller skating. She knows exactly what she will do in the future. It is to be a telecommunication operator in the Royal New Zealand Air Force. I am sure one day she will be able to do it as she wises.

On my birthday we have a party when Grandma also comes. I turn seventeen this year. Life is full of exciting things and promises. I shall never grow old.

Tracey is a 7^{th}-former but she studies in my Art History class. She is full of fun and a pleasure to be with. You do not feel down and out if you see her. She lightens up the heart of everybody around her. But once or twice I see her in a sad mood from which I really want to help relieve her but never know how to. She wants to become an artist of of various techniques.

Toni is another student in our Art History class. She wants to become an interior decorator. She suggests that I ski at Mt. Hutt, do some tramping, hiking and water-skiing at Lake Camp, all except for the first one of which I should do in summer as the winter is rather harsh.

Among Allison's interests are hockey and collecting New Zealand and British stamps, of which she has a very large collection. She writes for Phoenix, our school page in the local newspaper. She lives in a mixed

cropping, which means that they have both livestock and crops. There are around 1,200 sheep in her farm and the crops grown are white clover, wheat, barley, oats, and peas. For pets they have Tip who is a young sheep-dog and Oscar and Sammy who are cats. The lambing time is during the August holidays while for harvesting it is during January and February. She wants to go to the Canterbury University and do either Biology or Botany. Then she wishes to work for the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research in Wellington. She suggests that I walk the Lewis and Arthurs Passes. There are also the Hepburn, Routeburn and Milford tracks all of which have beautiful scenery.

At school there are five periods a day, five days a week. We study for each subject four periods per week. For Art History I study in 1-1, 2-2, 3-4 and 4-5, the first number being the day of the week and the second number the period of the day. For Computer Studies it is 1-5, 2-4, 3-5 and 5-2, for English 1-2, 2-3, 3-1 and 5-5, for Geology 2-1, 3-3, 4-2 and 5-4, for Maths 1-3, 3-2, 4-4 and 5-1, and for Music it is 1-4, 2-5, 4-1 and 5-3. This makes altogether 24 periods each 25 period week, and therefore I have a study hour every week that is sometimes spent in the library.

School buildings are called blocks, each of which is run through by corridors that are lined on both sides by lockers and doors opening into classrooms. The blocks are named by the letters of the alphabet, and the classrooms by the block names followed by a number. The room for Art History is C1, for Computer Studies S9c, for English S5, for Geology T14, for Mathematics S19 and for Music either A4, A7, or A9. The study period is in R1 which is equipped with drawing tables.

It could have been decided among my classmates even before I came that Philip would look after me in the beginning. Whatever it was the case, he has untiringly helped me much, especially during the first few months. People will see the three of us, including Roger who is his close friend, together quite a lot. Roger thinks that good things come in little parcels. Philip says that as his name may be rendered in Maori as Piripi, mine may be called Honore which I think means *honour*, an approximate meaning of my first name Kittisak. 'Kia ora e Honore', he wrote in my note book, 'Kei te tuhia ahau ki akoe. Kaua e tauhou ekoe ki matau i Ashburton College. Tatau e tatau'.

My 602 class teacher, Mr. Mathias, is also my Computer Studies teacher. The first thing he did was to assign Chris the task of looking me through getting acquainted with the computers, a task which the latter dreaded. Chris thought that my accent was very strong and difficult to comprehend. I think that it is more because I still had not grasped the Kiwi accent then.

But now that I have adopted the New Zealand accent, Philip, that is

another Philip in our class where there are two people of such name, for one suddenly thinks that he can understand me much better than before. He learns Pascal while I have been trying to learn Basic. I did try my hands once or twice on Pascal but still can not understand it. Computer is still difficult because no one knows how one should learn it, since it is a totally new subject. Writers of textbooks in this field also have yet to learn how to explain effectively a procedural grammar. Philip lives in a farm of 475 acres, which is mainly a sheep farm but also have 60 acres wheat, barley and other crops.

Neal and Janine are lovers. They are always in the arms of each other whenever they are together, which is most of the time. Both like roller-skating which they could do together at their skating lessons.

Neal's mum is Australian and met his dad in New Guinea. He has a brother, who is at the moment studying at a university, and an Australian sister. Himself, he says, he was made in Australian and born in New Zealand. One day he wants to visit his relatives in Australia. His granddad still rows a boat about two kilometres to o fishing while his grandmother can still jump fences. They are both 85 or thereabouts.

Wendy loves basketball, but she also likes skiing, ice- and roller skating. I feel attracted to her but she does not want to be closer to me than as friends. Being inexperienced I would not know anyway what being more intimate than friends means.

Brett lives in a farm in Hinds where I visit twice. He is a good student and his essays in our English class find very few, if indeed any equal. He collects stamps. On his farm there is a migrating white heron which comes and builds its nest each year on top of a tree. Theirs is a beautiful farm, the road leading into which is private and lined with tall trees that act as wind breakers. One day an object fell out of the sky on their land, a heavy metallic globe with thick shell the size slightly larger than a football and made in Russia. In fact it was a part of a russian space craft. Some American scientist came and cut out a piece of it to study and keep in their collection. They had to cut through a shell half an inch thick.

The Westcoast of South Island is often called Wet Coast because it is wet almost all year round. The weather is very much like a tropical climate. It is filled with forests or jungles, with large, deep rivers with plenty of water. There are bars typical to the gold-mining era, which has a piano, a bass, a pool table, a counter, plenty of beer, the sound and the good and smoky atmosphere. People living in Westport, for instance, fish for white bait. Some work in factories, for example cement industry, others own or work in a shop. I go there with the tramping club.

Interesting places around Westport are the Ballroom on Fox River,

which is an overhanging rock covering an area larger than a football ground, Sanardu on Bullock Creek where there is a grow worm cave, Shangy town in Greymouth where there used to be gold mines, Pancake Rock between Westport and Greymouth that has two blow holes and a ten minute walking track, Coal town with its museum in Westport, and Lyell between Westport and Murchison with its gold mines and a 2-3 hour walking track.

The Show Weekend starts from 11 and lasts until 13 November. On Friday 11th I meet with Nāuy, Òn and Scott at the bus station in Christchurch around noon. Then we go together to Addington Park too see horses trotting; Scott is driving. There we meet Jo together with the parents of his brother-in-law, whom he calls Dad and Mom.

At night we go to the Christchurch Methodist Church Hall where we meet many AFS students from the South Island, both those who come from Thailand and those who come from other countries. Together we play games and talk among one another all across the hall. We finish between ten o'clock and half past ten. I ask Scott's Mom, Nāuy's host mother, afterwards about the show tomorrow night when I plan to spin some torches again. I wonder whether they would mind having a performance which uses fire indoor. She says she will ring Peter tomorrow and ask. So to bed we go.

On Saturday we go to Hydro-slide in the morning with Survan from Canada and a girl from Sri Lanka. The tickets cost $ 3.50 each. There is a big swimming pool and another pool to receive people popping off from the chutes. We finish around 11:30. At noon we watch Maoris doing Hangi. Then we have lunch which we have brought along with us. After lunch everyone goes to Ferrymead, all except a few of us, namely Òn, Nāuy and his Mom who have to go back and prepare things for the performance tonight, that is the Torch Dance and the Thai Boxing. Mom takes us back in her car.

We come back to the Maori place again at 5:30 for the Hangi. In the hall there is a stage where we first we sit down and watch maori dances. Then it becomes our turn to give the performances we have prepared in return for the hospitality received. Most shows tonight are those by Thai students. We have a Sabre (Krabḭ̄) and a Two-handed Sword (Ḍ̀ạḅ Saung Mụe) Dances, Thai Boxing Dance, Muay Thai (Moay Daiy) demonstration, the northeastern Rice Box Dance (Zōeng Kratīḅ Khạ̀w) and Torch Spinning (Blaung Fai). Everything is a success, especially the last one, Blaung Fai. I say this not because I performed that show but it is always an exciting show. It is also relatively rare, even to Thai people. Now and again one may come across a similar performance in Thailand which uses a few different movements, but I can do more than

ten different moves. I have never seen any school that knows as many movements as ours does. As a principle none of us teaches for money. So chances are that there are less than a hundred people in the whole world who know how to do the Blaung Fai the way I am doing it tonight, and this is Christchurch not Thailand. We shake hands and thank our hosts for the hospitality and then adjourn to Peter's house for a party. Here we dance with great zest.

The Moay Daiy demonstration I did with Òn. It begins with some jabbing followed by Aiyàraṇ's Trunk (Hak Ngoang Aiyàraṇ), Reverse Elbow (Śauk Klaḅ), Crocodile's Tail (Càuràkhè Faḍ Haṇg), Kneeing and Òn's seeming death, brought about by Beheading Tośàkarrṇ (Bặn Śiar Tośàkarrṇ).

Next morning, Sunday 13th, we canoe in Avon River inside Hagley Park. Then we play cards at Nāuy's place. At 5:30 I get on the same bus as Kelly's, and find myself in Ashburton around 7 pm.

At the party I met Charlie who is one of the committee of Southerland Chapter. He introduced himself and later suggested on a piece of paper that I should come down as a guest to do the Milford Track, a trip he is organising for the students of his chapter. 'Be in Invercargill Thurs 1st Dec', the note says, 'Stay with us. Travel to Te Anau morning 2nd Dec. Start track that afternoon. Finish Monday 5th. Travel to Queenstown that evening See Queenstown Tues. then return home'. He wrote down his address and telephone number in Invercargill. At home I show the note to Dad and Mum. They call Charlie at his home.

On Thursday 1 December I take a train, the Southerner, from Ashburton to Invercargill. I meet Eric from Hongkong on the train. We sit talking until past Oamaru. Then we part to have lunch at our separate cars After having passed Oamaru I find Judy and Kathrin sitting on the came car as mine. They both sit behind me, which accounts for my not seeing them earlier. Before we reach Dunedin I introduce Eric to them. Then we all move to where Eric is sitting to talk.

At Dunedin I get off to meet Òn. I say good-bye to Eric and come to sit with him. We joke with Judy and Kathrin. Òn is more experienced than I am in a matter of girls.

We arrive to find Invercargill overcast and the air rather cool. By contrast the weather was very nice in the morning. Charlie is there to meet us. Òn goes with his host family. Judy, Kathrin and I stay at Charlie's place. I share a room with his youngest son. After tea we talk about AFS students who have been sent back before the end of their stay. We also talk about the coming-up bus trips which will take students from South Island up to North Island and vice versa. He does not agree with the idea because he thinks they are too short for us to see

anything much. I travel home from Queenstown by Mount Cook bus.

At Ashburton College I learn the violin. I have learnt some of it for nearly a year in Thailand before I came here, but I have learnt a lot more here. Mr. Slade is a professional player in the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra. The first thing he teaches me is how to relax. I find it very difficult to relax my muscles properly, and can never do so well enough. But during the last lesson he gave me we played a duet together, and I thought I could get a glimpse of how it feels to play in a relaxed manner. To properly relax there must be no tense muscles in your body. In particular, your neck, shoulders and limbs have to be completely relaxed.

This is the Third Term at school. This term I have altogether six twenty-minute violin lessons. The time varies and only repeats itself once. These lessons are in October and November, namely 3/10 10:10, 10/10 10:30, 17/10 9:10, 31/10 9:30, 7/11 9:50, and 14/11 10:30. The 24th October is Labour Day, so there is no lesson. The 14th November coincides with School Certificate examinations of Form 5, while 21 November with University Entrance and University Bursaries examinations.

Similar to most of the text books I use, my violin is borrowed from the school. The school uniform I wear is not borrowed but is paid for by the same. Normally students are required to buy their own uniforms. Used clothes are received and sold on Thursdays at between 10:15 am and 1:15 pm on 13 and 27 October and on 10 November. Form 7 students are not required to wear uniforms at school. They are also the only people to have a common room. Being an AFS student I have the privilege that, even though I am in 6th Form, I am allowed inside the common room reserved for 7th Formers. I have only used it once, soon after I arrived. It is spacious inside, with a coffee corner, sofas and plenty of places to sit. Teachers may not enter it without asking for permission from the president of Form 7 students. When I was there, Sox was there too. He is my classmate, but I think because he was with me he was allowed inside. Perhaps the rule is not so strict after all. Anyway 6th Former and 7th Formers are only one year apart, unlike 7th Formers and teachers. Later I will always remember that Sox was sitting there with me in the common room because he asked me what song I want to listen to and I said I wanted to listen to Queen (1971 – 91), and he said they have none. So I said, 'Then anything will do', thinking to myself, 'Why bother asking if you don't even have a single song by Queen'.

Michael Jackson has recently released his single Beat It. I like the music video of the song that sometimes shows on the TV. Music videos have only come into being not long ago. The first Aids patient in the US

has just made headlines. No one would be able to imagine the scale of the pan-epidemic it would evolve into in twenty year's time. Upon my request Philip writes down the words in the song Beat It for me. Then I find out to my surprise that 'Beat it!' actually mean 'Flee!' He writes down another song for me, *Life Begins At 40* by Dave and the Dynamos, on 19 September.

> I was feeling rather naughty so I went down to the Disco-tet;
> I was sitting in the corner with a pretty little thing called Bet.
> She had one arm on me shoulder the other on my arm,
> I see she was surcoming [sic] to my old fashioned charm,
> When a bloke who was bigger than a ten-ton digger threw me out.
> And I told him, 'Life begins at 40, you wonder why you feel so naughty.
> You may be getting on but you can't stop shaking your feet.
> Your body sure is willing, even though your back is killing.
> You may be 40 but you can't stop rocking to the beat.'

And so on. Then he is thrown out by Mick Jagger's ten-ton digger of a body guard, and afterwards by his wife's new man with the same description.

Fifteen years later in Japan I read a news where one Japanese boy was shot by a police in front of a department store. The police brandished his gun and says, 'Freeze!' I do not know if the boy saw the gun because presumably by then he had already started to run away from something. Sometimes you get involved in things you have not been involved in. Anyway he fled and was shot dead.

I was not there so I can not say what really happens, whether the boy the police shot is a wrong person or whether he is the wrong one. Myself, because I hardly watch violent Hollywood movies, I would not have known what that policeman meant when he said that word. More likely than not, I could have assumed that he said 'Flee!', which of course is just the opposite! One thing more I will have happened to remember then, that is to a Japanese ear the letters *r* and *l* sound not similar but the same to the effect of which that unfortunate fellow earthling of mine would necessarily hear 'Fleeze!' and the accent would be on the double *e*'s not the *z*.

That's Incredible is a television series that shows incredible pot-pourris. For example there is a man who can listen to a record by reading the grooves on the disc. Without having been given any clue he could identify easily all the fifteen discs shown. Among these were Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker Suite and the last and most

difficult of all not a classical music but an American rhapsody which he also identified correctly.

I join the school orchestra playing the second violin. Elaine is our conductor. I play so badly I think I should have been fired but for the fact that she is very kind. The important aim of all the music department's activities, namely the girl's choir, senior chorale and orchestra, is participation. Helping her is Vicki Thorpe, my music teacher. Elaine is the wife of my Geology teacher, Mr. Vallender.

On 2nd December 1983 we begin our walk on the Milford Track. First we go in a bus to Te Anau where we have lunch. We sit in front of the Information Centre waiting for Charlie. Asking Malcolm who is a host dad of Rose, he said that Charlie has to wait for some of the students from Invercargill because they have to wait until the school hour finishes. I buy a souvenir book and talk to a staff inside the Information Centre who say that to walk the Milford Track one must board a boat at Te Anau Downs. So Òn's host mum takes us there in her car. The sky is overcast and it is drizzling all the time. We are the first ones to reach Te Anau Downs. Once everyone has arrived, we put all our rucksacks on the boat. We are given two oranges each. The boat takes a few hours. It ends at Glade House where be alight. We are 28 people altogether. Normally only the maximum of 24 are allowed to walk the track each day. We distribute our food among us and start walking. We all rub lotion on our skin to drive away the sand-flies.

The weather is not good at all. It drizzles all day long. We pass through valleys where cliffs on both sides are lush with vegetation, cut at interval by white long streaks of water falling down the rock face. This goes on for a considerable stretch of the track. The surrounding is quaint, quite out of this world. Apart from the constant drizzle there is also some fog, which makes distant hillsides hazy too look at and far away peaks obscure. The air seems close to saturation. One feels the presence of tiny water particles lingering in the air, and can not help but breath them in. The walking party automatically divides itself into groups of three to four people. All around are thick forests. At parts they look like deep jungles with lichens and moss everywhere, on the ground, draping around tree trunks and hanging high up on the branches. At one point we see a collapsed hut, supposedly what used to be an accommodation for trampers. Land slid from underneath it some time ago when there was a heavy downpour. Once it rained here six inches in a day! We spend our first night at Clinton Falls hut, or was it Clinton Forks. The hut has thirty beds and one kitchen.

Judy had trouble with blisters on her left foot during the day. Òn and I had to wait for her several times. She hopes tomorrow they will

not be as bad as today. She comes from California. Katherine, from West Germany, says she loved the trees and all the wild plants. But she hope it would stop raining. She wants to become a veterinarian but that would have to wait until two and a half years after she returns home.

Jane is local. In fact she is from Invercargill. She like punk music and plan to go to Otago University to study English and Classics. She likes Bob Dylan's songs,

> May you build a ladder to the stars and climb on every rung.
> And may you stay forever young.

Kathy comes from Lafayette, a commuter town of San Francisco. Her attitude towards life is rather interesting.

> I felt sorry for myself because I have no shoes,
> But then I met a man who had no feet.

One of the sayings she likes,

> I thought I was wrong but I was mistaken.

There is also Leigh from Te Anau who lives in Invercargill. He is still fifteen but wishes to do AFS over to America.

On the second day we have good weather. It is Saturday 3, December. We start at 8 in the morning. I walk with Judy, Charlie and Òn. We stop very often to take pictures. I have put on my feet two pairs of socks because a slight burning feeling in my heels makes me fear that I would get blisters.

We stop for lunch at the Mintaro Hut and stay there for the night. The rugged face of a mountain nearby towers over the hut. Nearby is the Lake Mintaro where the water is cold as ice. Òn and I find a spot where it is shallow and take a quick dip in the freezing water. We rest the whole afternoon. The weather improves by and by in the afternoon. The late afternoon sun baths the rock faces in gold. Nearby mountain tops cast their shadow on the rocks. The beds are two-tiered and stand in rows. The place is rather spacious and the ceiling high. One could easily walk around upright on the top deck. We lie on our beds talking and playing games.

Charlie is now 46 and works helping towards the welfare and rehabilitation of jobless people. He thinks that people are more important than money. It was he who invited me over to do this tramping tour. We are in different AFS chapters. He runs the Southerland Chapter while I am an AFS student of the Canterbury Chapter. He has five children. Ewen is the warden of the Clinton Falls hut. Kathryn works for Pan Am Airlines. Bruce is with the Aluminium Smelters plant in Invercargill. Garey and Melinda are both in High School.

Canterbury Chapter who looks after me comprises Joyce who is President and who also is responsible with regard to the Newsletter. Basil is Vice President as well as looks after the Fund Raising. Pat is the Secretary and looks after Selection. Dave is the Treasurer, Doreen Counselling Coordinator and Bill Assistant Counselling Coordinator. School Liaison includes another Pat, Marion and Angela. Gill and Claire are responsible for host family finding, Mel student activities, John publicity and promotion and Michael and Caroline also fund raising. Leon looks after billeting business and Elaine catering.

Sandra is from Chicago. She is going to finish high school soon. She wants to go to university to study to become a teacher who teaches physical education. She wants to work with young and handicapped children. Like me, she is now seventeen years old and like me, she is the youngest of four children. She is truly a chatter box, Sandy is.

Anna comes from Invercargill. She wants to go to Japan with AFS next year. She likes travelling and all kinds of sports, tennis, skiing, swimming, net ball and volley ball. Dave is also from Invercargill. He is a chemical engineer and loves what he is doing. He said,

> Laugh, and the world laughs with you.
> Smile, and the world wonders what you are up to.

Lynda goes to Southland Girl's High School in Invercargill. She hopes to go to the US with AFS next year, and she wants to become a doctor in the future. Her favourite sports are tennis, basketball and table tennis.

The following day, Sunday 4 December, we start at eight. This is the most important day of the walk, or so Charlie says. We are lucky because the sun is shining and the sky is clear. I walk with Jane, Judy and Òn. We have between six and seven miles to do, which is by no mean much except that the path is uphill. We trudge up to Mackinnon Pass on top of a mountain. It is quite windy and cold up there. There are stone-paved paths, a lake and a structure built of rock with a cross on top. The paths, lake and us are surrounded by tussocked ground. Several Keas fly about very low. When I sit down and stretch my leg, one grounds and busily pecks at my shoe. We have hot soup, then walk descend to Quintin for lunch. Sand-flies everywhere. Can never do without the lotion.

We rest for an hour or so at a junction. To the left the sign says a path leads to Quintin Huts and Sutherland Falls, to the right Dumpling Hut, Boatshed and Sandfly Point. Sandfly Point is 32 miles from Glade House, Lake Teanau, via Mackinnon Pass. We stop to have lunch at Quintin Huts before taking a short walk to Sutherland Falls. There is the Triple Falls, five minutes off from the route linking between Quintin Huts and Sutherland Falls. At one point a tuis walks across our path.

It seems quite familiar with people and does not become frightened and run away.

The Sutherland Falls are truly magnificent. It consists of a single streak of water leaping down in three steps. It is very high and the water roars as it jumps down to hit the rocks at the bottom. Nearby, water splashes everywhere and wet all over your face. The excursion to Sutherland- and Triple Falls has taken approximately one hour. Back at Quintin we are soon on our feet again. We spend the night at Dumpling Hut. There are at least seven or eight Kiwis around the hut. We hear their voice around 10 and 11 pm but could not see them. Go to bed at midnight.

Monday 5 December we start as usual at 8 am. We stop for lunch at Dough Boy and then walk another mile or so to Sandfly Point bordering Milford Sound where our walk ends. Here a boat picks us up and takes us to our bus on the other side. The water in the sound must be very deep, considering the shear slopes that come down and abruptly meet the water. The boat brings us to T. H. C. Milford. We walk to Milford Lodge to board our bus. We have walked altogether over fifty kilometres. All the paths are in good condition and posed no problems. The road from Milford to Te Anau is very beautiful. We stop along our way to look at the Chasm which lies between Milford Sound and Te Anau Down. It is a chasm of jagged-edged rocks cut through the ground and a waterfall. At Te Anau we have tea, after which we separate from the group and to with Philip to Queenstown. Judy and Kathrin come with us. Philip shows us around Queenstown, but we could not see anything much because it is already getting dark. Before Queenstown we passed Frankton, after Arrowtown.

Queenstown is now a crowded internationally touristic centre. During the 19^{th} century thousands of gold diggers comes to Queenstown in search for gold in the streams. After the gold rush was over the inhabitants of the town had dwindled to less than two hundreds around mid twentieth century. Now tourism has replaced gold. The view of the Remarkables with the deep blue water of Lake Wakatipu in the foreground is simply unforgettable. You can also take a gondola from behind the town up to Bob's Peak which provides a spectacular view. Queenstown's Motor Museum has a good collection of veteran and vintage cars.

By contrast Arrowtown has managed to retain its old charm. The main street here is lined with sycamores. There is the Lake District Centennial Museum an oldest part of which was built in 1875 to house a Bank of New Zealand.

The Shotover River saw during late 19^{th} century the biggest gold rush in Otago which was triggered by a chance discovery by two shepherds

in 1862. With its gorges and rapids today it is the playground of jet-boating. Edith Cavell Bidge provides a good view of the river. Some 90 metres above Shotover River swings Skippers Bridge which leads across to the old Skippers town, a bleak spot where thousands of people in search for gold used to camp. In a few year's time the first bungy-jumping will be done here, but now there still exists no such crazy thing as yet. For a long time the area around here has been a jumping-off point for trampers and tourists, for example those who want to walk the Routeburn and the Milford Tracks. But one day some people will take it literally and take to the bridge!

The next day Kathrin returns home by bus at 9 am. Judy decides to stay another day. In the morning we look at the farm, that is a deer farm, sheep and crops. There are wheat, barley, lucerne, flower for bees and hay. We look at the Kawarau and Arrow River, at the place where jet boats crashed against each other and five people died.

In the afternoon we do a tour of Queenstown. I book my bus ticket. Then we go up on Gondola, take some pictures, go to the looking-out point to see the view of Coronet Peak and Remarkables, Milford Sound, *etc.* After that we return home, go swimming and watch hay-packing. After dinner we play pool and piano before going to bed.

The following day is Wednesday 7 December. We leave at 9 in the morning, catch the bus coming from Invercargill at Arrow Junction. I travel with Judy to Twizel where we have lunch. We change our bus. Judy gets a Mount Cook Line one which goes to Timaru while I take the one that goes to Lake Rukaki, Lake Tekapo, Geraldine and Christchurch. I get off the bus at Ashburton and go to the post office where Nicki works. But it is closed, so I put my stuffs in her car first and then buy birthday cards for Andy and Judy. Back at home I do some laundry, write letters home and to Kåriyą, Charles and Charlie. I will send the letters tomorrow.

Recently there has developed in me an obsession in learning languages. Like all other novices in this area the first thing I want to learn is how to count from one to ten. Starting from Malaysian it is *satu, dua, tiga, empat, tima, enam, tujuh, lapan, sunbilan* and *sepuluh*, in Javanese a similar *siji, loro, telu, papat, limo, enem, pitu, wolu, songo* and *sepuluh*, in French *une, deux, trois, quatre, cinq, six, sept, huit, neuf* and *dix*, in Spanish *unu, dos, tres, cuatro, cinco, seis, siete, ocho, neuve* and *diez*, in Maori *tahi, rua, toru, wha, rima, onu, whetu, wuaru, igua* and *teko*, and finally in German *eins, zwei, drei, vier, fünf, sechs, sieben, acht, neun* and *zehn*. I am a polyglot and wish I could be a good one.

Eventually all roads travelling northwards on South Island go to Picton where you get a ferry to go across to Wellington. The town lies snugly in

the Shakespeare Bay. Two miles further from it is a small town Waikawa in a bay bearing the same name.

Towards the end of the exchange program there is a tour of North Island for students living in the South Island and vice versa. The trip program begins on Friday 9th and ends on Saturday 17th. The program is as follows. Friday 9th travel to Wellington, Saturday 10th Wellington – Otorohanga, Sunday *11:th* Otorohanga – Auckland, Monday 12th day in Auckland, Tueday 13th Auckland – Tauranga, Wednesday 14th Tauranga – Rotorua, Thursday 15th Rotorua – Hastings, Friday 16th Hastings – Wellington and Saturday 17th travel home.

School mottos are often interesting. For a school in Te Kuiti it's *semper paratus*, that is *always prepare*, for Ashburton College *resurgamus*, or *we rise again*, and the emblem is suitably a phoenix.

We gather and go up together in a bus, and on 10 December 1983 are travelling from Palmerston North to Tongariro Park. I am billeted with Mrs. Parker in Te Kuiti. The next day we visit the Glow-worm Caves and have lunch together at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Stiles. Then we head for Auckland.

Eric comes from Canada and he speaks French. His favourite song becomes ours, which he teaches us and which we sing along together thereafter.

> J'ai deux grand boeufs dans mon étable,
> Deux grand boeufs blanc taché de noir.
> J'aimerais mieux voir mourir ma femme
> Que de voir mourir mes deux grands boeufs.

Those who can not remember the words he teaches the accompaniment to keep them busy.

In Auckland we get on a boat and cruise around in the sea. We also go separately with the people we are staying with. The people I am billeted with take us windsurfing. The water in the sea is cold so I get to wearing a dry suit, but windsurfing I can not no matter how hard I try.

Auckland's Harbour Bridge was built in 1959. It links the city centre and the northern suburbs. It was originally built to accommodate four lanes. This was when it was 42 feet wide. Four more were added later to give a total of eight lanes. The bridge has its length 3348 feet, main span 800 feet and at high tide clears the water by 142 feet.

The sea off the coast of Auckland is sprawled with islands. The largest among these is Great Barrier Island. Some of the others are Kawau Island and Gulf Islands. These islands are lush and rugged.

On 13 December 1983 we all meet in front of a museum, the War Memorial Museum, prior to leaving Auckland. The museum stands on

a park, the Auckland Domain We go to Lake Taupo and Tauranga.

We go to Rotorua on the 14th where we visit a place called Hells Gate. We have a barbecue party at the place of the people who board one of us, that is to say, Tŭ. We spend the night at Rotorua. I stay with Mrs. Relph. The Relphs own a farm, a 1,500 acre sheep farm on the outskirt of Rotorua.

The new tractor should have arrived today, but it is now coming on Friday instead.

Maureen is a primary school teacher. She teaches third year students. In New Zealand kindergarten begins when children are three and a half years old. But this is not compulsory. Primary school is compulsory for every five year old child, of which there are altogether six years. Then follow two years of intermediate school and then three to five years high school, that is until Form 5 or 7 respectively. Their daughter, Susan, is spending her AFS years at this moment in St. Louis, Missouri, the one place in the US that is rich in culture though people may not realise it even though everyone knows Mark Twain. Byon, their son, is waiting his School Certificate exam results in January. He likes motor and mechanical things.

Rotorua means the *second lake.* It has an area of 32 square miles and drains some 159 square miles of land. It flows into its smaller neighbour, Rotoiti, the *small lake.*

On 15 December we visit the geothermal power plant at Wairakei. Going from Lake Rotorua to Lake Taupo we stop at Huka Falls, which really are rapids rather than falls. We reach Hastings on 16 December. Here we visit the Wattie's Can Food Production where staffs wear either blue or white gown and hard hat. I am billeted here with another Japanese girl. We stop at Upper Hutt.

We are in Wellington on 17 December and cross the Cook Strait on a ferry back to South Island. It is a nice day and we are all out on the deck sitting in the sun singing AFS songs. One such song goes, 'Walk together, talk together, O ye people of the earth! Then and only then shall ye have peace.' Then it is followed with 'AFS is love. AFS is brotherhood. We are here for just one year to make our message clear.' Other songs are, for examples, Yellow Submarine, Rivers of Babylon, Auld Lang Syne, Where Have All the Flowers Gone, Blowin' in the Wind and Leaving on a Jet Plane. We all have been given a song book recently compiled by Marlborough Chapter. Among the songs in the book is Home on the Range, which appears in disguise in Bless the Beasts and Children which I have just studied at school. The song goes,

> Oh give me a home
> Where the buffalo roam,

Where the deer and the antelope play.
Where seldom is heard
A discouraging word,
And the skies are not cloudy all day.

How often at night,
When the heavens are bright
With the light from the glittering stars,
Have I stood there amazed
And asked as I gaze,
If their glory exceeds that of ours.

Another song called Click Go the Shears which goes,

Out on the board the old shearer stands
Grasping his shares in his thick honey hands.
Fixing his gaze on a bare-bellied 'Joe',
And if he gets another one, man, won't he blow!

Click go the shares boys. Click, click, click!
Wide is his blow, and his hands move quick.
The ringer looks around and is beaten by the blow,
And curses the old snagger with the bare-bellied 'Joe'.

In the middle of the floor on his cane bottom chair
Sits the boss of the board with his eyes everywhere.
Notes well each fleece, as it comes to the screen,
Paying strict attention if it's taken off clean.

The tar-boy was there and waiting in demand
With his blackened tar-pot and his tarry hand.
Sees one old sheep, with a cut upon it's back,
Here's what he's waiting for. 'Tar here, Jack!'

Shearing is all over, and we've all got our cheques.
Roll up your swag boys, we're off on the track.
The first pub we come to, it's there we'll have a spree.
And everyone that comes along, it's 'Come and drink with me!'

Or the song in Maori,

Te i wi te, i wi e te i we e,
Ta hu ri mai ra, te nga ka u e.

Ki nga ku pu, o te ro ngo pai,
Hei o ra nga, o te i wi e.

which means in English, 'How is the hour when we must say good-bye! Soon you'll be sailing far across the sea. While you're away, o then remember me. When you return you'll find me waiting here. Since

the All Black has adopted it as their pre-match song, the enigmatic war dance Haka has come into play in every imaginable situation. It goes,

> Kamate, Kamate, Ka-ora, Ka-ora
> Tenei te tanga ta.
> Pu hu ru hu ru
> Nana rei tiki.
> Mai whaka whiti te ra
> Hupane, Hupane
> Hupane Kaupane whi ti te ra, 'Hey!'

From north to south, national parks in New Zealand include Te Urewera, Egmont, Tongariro, Abel Tasman, Nelson Lakes, Arthur's Pass, Westland, Mt. Cook, Mt. Aspiring and Fiordland.

I know my Sixth Form results soon after I came back from the trips. My Sixth Form Certificate has written on it the date 18 November 1983, which is my birthday. Coincidentally that date is actually my seventeenth birthday. I have satisfied the Sixth Form requirements in three of the subjects, namely Music, Computer Studies and Earth Science or Geology. In English my achievement is said to be adequate, and in Mathematics high. My University Entrance Exam results, however, still leave much to be desired. I have gained credits in Mathematics and Music. In order to gain access to a university I would need to have a credit for another subject as well as another one for English. I am disappointed with these latter results, but it could not be helped. Not that I have ever planned to go to a university here. One of the requirements made by AFS is that we return and stay for at least one year in our home countries after the exchange period. I do not know whether anyone would mind if I do not obey the rule but I am sticking to the agreement to the letter.

Apart from Mathematics and Music I had applied to sit two other University Entrance Exams, that is English and Art History. I failed English by a few points and chose to walk the Milford Track in place of sitting the UE exam on Art History.

Kelly passes her UE. She is also an AFS student at my school. There are only two, and I am the other one. She comes from Ellsworth, which has a population of about 60 and is near the National Park in Maine. She has come to love New Zealand and enjoys her time here. She wants to study international relations.

Before I leave New Zealand to go back to Thailand a journalist from a local newspaper comes to our place to interview and take a picture of me. The picture that he takes will turn out to be fine, but now when he is taking it I feel funny because he makes me hold a Kiwi doll very

close to my face for the pose. Taking pictures is my hobby, but I have never come across taking portrait photos until now. Despite his ability to take good pictures, he proves to be rather careless in details when it comes to writing his column. Both the first and the family names of Allister, my host dad, is spelt wrong. Good pictures are no excuses because it is easy to get at least one good picture using a motor-drive. It is also fairly straight forward to write an interview column; just putting everything that I say already makes one such article. For example, I come from a family who owns a shop which sells wool in the northern part of Thailand, play the violin in the school orchestra, want to study engineering, answer with affirmation when asked whether I look forward to returning to my home country and that this is because I will be able to speak Thai again then. And when I say that I leave with a mixed feeling, it appears as the title.

Monday o[2:nd] January 1984, today I wake up early. I look for poles to make the torches for spinning, because Kelly said that Nicki's mum wants me to perform at the camp tonight. So I cut some fresh wood from the creek in our camp. I only look for straight ones. I use the axe borrowed from Darrel's dad. I practise a little, then have dinner. Kelly, Nicki and one other girl come to talk before dinner. Today Kelly's sister Jo comes to the camp with her boyfriend. I show them where Kelly is because they do not know which caravan is hers.

I go to Hank's place in the afternoon, and leave the sticks and the cloth for making the torches there. Then we go together in three cars to the Hadlow Games Park. The cars belong to Hank, Flana, and the engineer and his wife. The Hadlow Games Park has among others, wallabies, red deer, emus, peacocks, monkeys, pandas, Thars, llama and American bisons.

Back at Hank and Carole's place we have a barbecue dinner on the lawn outside. Then I soak the the torches at both ends of the two sticks with a mixture of the same amount by volume of petrol and kerosine, which is the same as what I had done in my previous performance at Hank's place on the New Year. Then we watch the slides that Andy has brought with her from Thailand. Around 10 pm we are back at the camp. I spin the two torches at the children's playground because there are fences to prevent children from getting inside. Quite a few people watch me do the thing. I make the performance a rather long one this time, that is to say, between five and ten minutes. When I have finished, Dad says something. And then we come back to our tent. Kelly and the girls come around to talk for a while, and so does Linda. She was also there watching while I performed.

After that I take a shower and then come and talk with several people

who are also staying at the camp. They say they liked the show. The children are especially excited. Whether the camp's owner was there I do not know. But I guess he was; only that I do not know him.

So, there you go! This is already the fourth time in New Zealand that I do the fire sticks. To summarise, I have performed at the Show Weekend in Christchurch, at Ùay's and Tŭ's birthdays in Blenheim, after midnight on the New Year at Hank and Carole's place in Timaru, and here at the Selwyn Holiday Camp in Timaru where those who watched were people who stay at the camp.

In Thailand the fire sticks or *blaung fai* is never a major show. We only do it in between the more serious shows, for example the dancing or the fighting of the sabre, two-handed swords, wooden pole or *blaung*, wooden arm-guards or *māiśauk* and pole-hilted sword or *ngạ̄w*. I always say to my audiences that the fire poles are only used for warming up and warming down. 'But their movements,' I would continue, 'are the same as those in all other Thai weapons'. In the 16th and the 17th centuries, during the Ȧyudhȧyạ period, these pole spinning could have been used for entertainment as well as for practising at those times when there were no wars.

But when I am abroad, for example in New Zealand, Japan, or England, the fire dance always becomes the only thing people are interested in watching. I guess that this is because it is beautiful, exciting, gentle and culturally neutral. All *raṃ*'s or dances in Thai Weaponry are slow, while the fighting requires at least two persons to do, much concentration and, even with this, could be dangerous. To perform the fighting it is not enough only to have two persons who know how to use the weapons, but these two have to be from the same school or at least their weapon-wielding style should be similar. For instance, in two-handed swords you generally have two choices to receive an attack, that is either with the same hand as your opponent's, or the opposite. For example, if your opponent attack you with the sword he holds in is right hand and you choose to receive it also with your right hand's sword, then this is what's called the *inner reception*. And the *outer reception* is simply the opposite to this, that is to say, when attacked on your right-hand side, say, you receive it the blow with your right hand's sword. Our school *Śrị Ȧyudhȧyạ* never uses outer receptions, we always receive a blow to our right with the left hand's sword. One of our brother schools, which is in Laṃbụn, however, does just the opposite. Myself I would never dream of performing with someone from this school. You never mix the inner receptions with their counterparts in Thai sword, or you could get yourself killed or injured very easily, especially if you perform using metallic swords. Inner receptions facilitate your steps and make the two persons

revolve around each other like double stars. You can, without much difficulty, dodge and then come up behind the other person's back, and this facility is of course rather useful when you fight. However, the outer receptions are quicker and easier to do, or so they say. The drawback is that you only walk forwards and backwards, never sidewise. So that you need a wide platform or a large hall to accommodate your performance. In other words, you can not perform on the dance floor or inside a restaurant for pocket money. And that is a shame.

Apart from spinning the torches, I have done the sabre dance at Nāuy's family's place, at a potluck tea at the Papanui Hall when we introduce ourselves, and at the Show Weekend, all these places being in Christchurch. For the two-handed sword dance I performed at Nāuy's house in Christchurch when I also fought afterwards with an imaginary opponent, and again at the meeting if AFS students from both islands which was held in Blenheim during the August Holiday, this time the imaginary fight being excluded. The Thai boxing I fought a prepared fight with Òn, also at the Show Weekend in Christchurch, when we prepared one hour, and practised only ten minutes before the show. Flana sleeps in the tent outside with Andy tonight.

I wake up at around 8 am, have a shower and brush my teeth. I think we are going to the Peel Forest today. The weather is fine this morning. I have my picture taken in front of the caravan, with the spent torches from the performance last night. Then we go to Hank and Carole's place. From there we go to Peel Forest. On our way we stop at the Geraldine Museum, which is a museum of cars, tractors, aeroplanes and machineries, all the types of which seem no longer in use nowadays. Dad explains to me how these things work. Then we finally go to the Peel Forest.

Today we also come in three cars, that is those of Hank, Dad, and the engineer and his wife. We have our dinner at Peel Forest, and the walk to the Acland Fall. Grandma has come with us, but she sits at the picnic ground and waits, instead of going for a walk. I think she is Carole's mother. Next to the picnic ground is the Rangitata River. This is a picnic area.

We go further to the sheep station of the family of one of the first settlers. We look at the church that was built by the Acland family who were nobles who came from England. It is a Anglican church. There is a big house in which Queen Elizabeth used to stay when she came to New Zealand. On our way back to the camp, I sit in the car of the engineer Allen and his wife.

Back at the camp I walk pass the playground when one of the kids aloud say, 'Hey!, this is the one that did the fire dance last night!'

I sit inside the caravan reading. Then Ritchie and Darrel come in to play poker, so I go out and watch the television at the TV room. There I meet two girls who came from Christchurch, one of whose name is Jandy, and two boys. One of the boys came from Auckland. The other one, whose name is Brenn, came from Gore. He is going to be studying in 6^{th} form this year.

After that I come back to the caravan to sit and read *Coma*. This evening we have fish 'n chips for tea. The couple who live next door to our caravan are going away tomorrow, and so they are packing up their belongings.

Wednesday 4^{th} January 1984, it is 10 am when I wake up. I go to say goodbye to Darrel because his dad and his family are going back today. Our neighbouring caravan has already gone back to Christchurch, and someone takes their place before noon today. My dad and mum go out together in search of Charlie's telephone number in Alexandra. They phoned, but he was not there.

Afternoon finds us in town, shopping. We look inside a souvenir shop. I want to buy a T-shirt, but there are no probable sizes for me unless these could have been OS and XOS, both of which are too large. Back at the camp we watch on television the New Zealand Championship of outdoor bowling in Dunedin. This is already the final. The we talk with other Kiwis there.

The weather is not that well today, though it is by no mean too bad. Overcast sky in the morning later clears up, and there is no rain. We go to the bay, and board Mr. Freeman's jet boat. There is there a swimming competition in the sea inside the bay where everyone swims in a triangular circuit around three floats. Stuart and Fiona are competing, though they do not win. This done, we come back to the camp where Andy makes some chips and we eat and then go to bed early. Charlie has called to tell that everything is all right.

I wake up early this morning, then go to the post office while Mum goes to get the two rolls of film for me, Thursday 5^{th} January. The we go to the auction market for vegetables. Then I board a Mt. Cook Line bus at 10 o'clock. The bus goes along the Lake Pukaki. Then it passes Twizel where we stop for lunch, and then change into another bus, that is from Number 770 to Number 539.

Two girls, one Megan who studies 5^{th} form at the Timaru Girl's High while the other, Lani, is also in 5^{th} form but at the Mountain View High. The driver tells them to 'keep an eye on the Thai boy', that is me. He fears that I will get on the wrong bus. Both of them are also going to Cromwell. They are going to stay with Lani's grandparent in Alexandra during the holidays.

To Twizel it is raining and clouded. After we have got on another bus in Twizel it stops raining, but is still overcast and quite cold. I meet an aged woman on the bus who says she had been to places all over Europe. Charlie and Jeanette pick me up in Cromwell. Between here and Alexandra is the construction of Lake Dunstan, the project of which started in 1977. It will begin to produce the electricity in 1987. They are building the dam gates now, and the road is also being raised. Cromwell will be underwater when they have finished. This includes the many orchards that grow apricots around here. Some historic sites will also be buried, in particular an old cottage and tools of the pioneering Chinese gold-diggers who were the first to come here.

Around here is the McKenzie High Country where apricots grows well because of the very hot and dry summer. Very little rain falls here compared wit the Fiordland and Invercargill; approximately 15 mm per year. Charlie says that it was very hot two days ago, with the temperature of 31–32°C. At the dam gate I meet Megan and Lani again. We smile to each other and I introduce them to Charlie.

Charlie stops his car along the way to buy fruits and lettuces, and also to visit a couple who used to be AFS counsellors and executives. Both are pleasant to be with. Lake Dunstan stretches further from Cromwell to Clyde where there is a dam gate. The nearer to Cromwell the more rocks you see.

We see the slides which Charlie had taken while we walked the Milford Track, and I show him the slides I have brought with me. We walk around the camp, then go to see the Fun Night at the hall. Charlie have a talk with the owner of the camp about my fire-stick show, and they decide to let me perform tomorrow's night. Also we will try to contact Òn tomorrow, though I do not know where he is now. We read for a while before going to sleep.

On the following day, Friday 6th January 1987, I wake up early. After lunch we visit Òn at Clyde where he stays with Ann's parents. Here to Clyde I come with Charlie. We meet Russel, Ann, Jane, together with three of her friends and Òn. Charlie, Òn and I go to play golf. This is the first time that I touch a golf club, let alone play with it.

At the golf course here in Clyde, Charlie plays with Russell and Ross. Russell stays at the Alexandra Holiday Camp now, while Ross is the host dad of Theresa who walked the Milford Track with us. We play together the first round of nine holes, but the second round we play on our own at the practising area for beginners. Òn has played before, and he plays quite well. He can even drive whereas I only can chip shorter shots.

A round of golf is a good time for talking. This is why it is a businessmen's sport. Òn and I talk with each other about various things. He

has experiences with girls and even have had sex with some of them. He tells me how to do it, but it is difficult to imagine such thing when you are still a virgin. He has told Nāuy the same thing, he says, and he had heeded his advice and will soon give up his virginity. This will prove to be the case. Myself I know I shall never be able to do it. I have often talked and laughed with girls, and I know they like me. But how do you go about asking them that we should have sex too? Forget about sex, how you cross the friendship-lover line, that is the question.

After golf we drink beer at the club's room where I also play with Òn two games of pool. Ross pays for these pool games. Then we come back to Òn's place to find out that both Russell and Ann have already gone out. Jane is here alone, so we tell her about Òn's coming with us to the camp to give a performance, and that he will have tea there with us.

The music at the camp has started, but no one can be seen dancing for it is not yet the right kind of music for that. I find the two poles I need for making the fire sticks. At the garage inside our camp I transform the poles into my performance equipments, half and hour before the appointed time. I make them quicker than usual. After I have finished I soak them with the fuel mixture, then spin it outside for a while to get rid of the excess oil. After that, each using one pole I perform with Òn. Then I with the two poles do the two-handed spinning alone. It is already past 10 pm by the time I finish, but it is still not that dark. We carry on with our next show doing the Thai boxing. One of us pushes the other with both hands, then again with one foot, and then there are neck-lock and kneeings, parallel kicks where you kick your opponent's side with your kicking leg parallel to the ground; *Hak ngoang aiyára* where you grasp the leg kicking you in one of your arms and then hurt it with another; *Caurákhèfaádhang* where you will have turned your body a full circle and meanwhile hit the other party while he is behind you; then reverse elbows and then we press both palms together and call it a day. After the performance we dance at the Hall the entrance of which is free. At around 11 pm we return to Charlie's tent, talk together for a while and then Charlie and I take the girls and Òn back to Clyde. We come back about midnight, take a shower, read, and then at around one o'clock in the morning sleep. Charlie's caravan is large. We sleep together in it, one on each side of the walls. We always read quietly in our bed for a while before turning our lamp lights off, say goodnight to one another and sleep. With them I can reflect.

Saturday 7th January 1987, I go to Clyde in the morning together with Charlie, Jeanette and Melinda. I stay one day at Òn's place. We play tennis at a place a little further away from the golf course, then come back to have lunch, and then play volleyball and swim. Òn's brother's

name is David who is cute. Jane's three friends are Maya who comes from South Africa, Cathy and Rachel.

Today's weather is excellent. We have the sun all day and it is hot. After lunch we swim, then play volleyball, and then swim again. Then we come inside and talk. We play tennis again in the evening around 9 pm and, when we come back, again swim. Then I leave for the camp. Russel, Ann, Jane, Òn, Cathy and Maya also come along to see me back to the camp. At the camp I brush my teeth, read and then sleep around 11.

I like it in summer, even though it is hot. There is nothing like the heat of summer. Not only here in the Lake Country, but also in Thailand. The tropical Thai summer is hot but not humid, and the whiff of heat you feel on your face under a hat, or the gentle breeze both dry and warm that reaches you when you sit in the shade, is so incomparably memorable. So we sat together in a summer house, with the light from the bright nature outside sifting in through the opened windows and doors, and Maya and Cathy alternately drawing my picture in my friendship book. Both girls are nice, and gentle to boot. I also feel that they like me, who like Jane who never loves me. Nothing in the world is what you want it to be. Jane likes punk music, Oi, New Wave, Joe Jackson, Bob Dylan, and Beatle's John Lennon and George Harrison. She was sixteen last year and wants to go to the Otago University in Dunedin after her 6^{th} form, which is going to be next year.

Sunday 8^{th} January 1987, we pack our things into the car in the morning, then leave the Alexandra Holiday Camp roughly at noon. We travel along State Highway Number 8 all the way until we reach a junction where we turn right. Here the left turn would have led us to Dunedin. We come on to Highway Number 1 before we reach Gore.

Along our way from Alexandra to Invercargill we stop at the Mitchell Cottage which was the home of a settler who came to live here because of the gold in Central Otago. There are three methods you may use to find gold, namely pan, sluicing, and water dredging the process of which uses mercury. Houses are built of rocks bound together by mud. We stop several times to buy fruits from the various orchards. At one such places is the cherry orchard where we pick the fruits ourselves and then pay at the owner's house. While inside the orchard we may eat the cherries as much as we want.

From Central Otago we come to West Otago. Plants grow superbly here since the climate is much better than in Canterbury. Farming is thus better because there is much rain. We stop to look at the Roxburgh Dam.

At Invercargill we visit Charlie's Mum. Charlie has brought along

with him some fruits to give to her. We drink tea and then return to Charlie's place. I do not know why a highway here is called a 'State' Highway.

Charlie's work concerns with the unemployed. He finds jobs for them, or give them initiatives towards employability and employment. We also talk about people with dyslexia, whose condition makes them able to neither read nor write. These people are unable to spell and are totally word-blind, but their thoughts are otherwise normal. Some can write, but they can only write from right to left. Leonardo da Vinci wrote in this manner. But I think that his may be the case where you can also write normally from left to write. When one can write equally well with both hands, writing in this reverse manner comes naturally, as I know from experience. I was not born an ambidextrous, but through a strange, persisting inner drive and practice I can now do most things equally well with either one of my hands. One day I found to my surprise that I could also write like da Vinci.

Charlie's son, Bruce, bought a vintage car Nash of 1930, which must be one of the later ones since vintage car means those cars manufactured between 1917 and 1930. It has costed him over NZ $ 5,000. He painted it anew and changed from 6 to 12 volts and 2 batteries.

On the following day, Monday 9th January, at 10 am I go with Jeanette's father and Melinda to the Alliance Freezing Co. which is between Inverness and Winton. Before entering the place we all have to wear a scrub suit and a hat. We look at the pens used to divide the sheep into flocks according to the different farms from which they come. The sheep are herded around inside the small enclosure which keeps shifting along until finally they reach the entrance of a passage that leads them to the chain room where they are slaughtered.

The sheep are killed by shocking it with electricity at the nape of their neck. The next process is to let all the blood drains. The carcasses are then skinned and the entrails separated and sorted into groups. Everything up to this point is carried out in the chain room, the name of which probably comes from the chains used to hang the carcasses to the hooks on the conveyor belt above. The chain room is no place for women.

Sheep's brains are mostly sent to France where people like to eat them. We look at how the sausage skins are made from intestines of the sheep, the small intestines that is. What remain that can not be used are made into dried, crushed food for feeding animals. Bones are turned into bone dust, used as a fertiliser. To separate wool from the skin, the latter is painted with sodium sulphide which free the roots of the hair, after which the wool can be pulled off with ease.

The wool thus obtained is pressed into solid bales using the wool

presser. The sodium sulphide on the hide is washed off, and the hides themselves are graded into 90 different grades. Similarly the wool is graded into 20 grades. Mutton and lamb are also graded. This information is fed into the computer which calculates the amount of money to be paid to the farmer, who receives the money next morning.

Then we look at the process of making dried food by using the vacuum. The principle for this is easy. Water is drawn towards the ground by the gravity of the earth in the absence of air. The AF slaughters between 20,000 and 32,000 lambs a day.

Back at Charlie's place I have lunch with Melinda. Then Charlie calls. Nana, that is Charlie's mother, comes to pick me up. We visit a relative who lives in Woodlands in the country, Agnes and Philip who own a truck company. Their daughter lives in Christchurch with her Japanese husband. They own a restaurant that mainly does quick lunches. Jason their eldest son is five, and their daughter is two. I go with Philip in his truck. We send lambs to the Alliance Freezing were I had just been in the morning.

After tea during the daylight saving time, that is around 8 pm, I go with Bruce and Sandy to Tiwai Point where the Aluminium Smelting plant is. Sandy is an AFSer from Chicago, and Tiwai Point is on the opposite side of Bluff across the Bluff Harbour.

We drive to the wharf to look at the place where they unload coke, pitch and aluminium. These then come along the conveyor belts to a covered area where they are kept in buildings 2,000 feet long. The distance they travel on the main rollers of the belts is approximately two miles. We put on safety hat and glasses before we enter the plant where aluminium is smelted. Aluminium ore is melted in a blast furnace, then poured into huge ladles which tilts to pour the molten aluminium from their lips into a pouring end which is connected to the metal runner. The liquid metal runs along this runner and fills in all the moulds which are lined up in series. The ingots resulted are later stacked up in mountains outside. We also look at the place where the coke is pressed. The smelter has a chimney stack 449 feet high and produces 244,000 tonnes of aluminium a year. The company is Australian and the workers here are well paid, approximately $ 500 – 1,000 a week.

Environmentalists here must have been busy in the 1960s. One of their masterpieces was over the issue of making hydro-electric power from the water in Lake Manapouri to power the aluminium smelter at Tiwai Point. When it became known that a plan was made to raise the water level of this lake by 90 feet, people protested. In the end a compromise was made by which the water in that lake is used to produce the electricity but the water level is still maintained.

I wake up on Tuesday 10 January 1987 at 8 am, and at 8:15 Jeanette send me to the airport. There I wait for Charlie, and when he arrives he buy the plane tickets for both of us to fly to the Stewart Island. It takes us 20 minutes to fly there from Inverness. On the island we go in a passenger-van to the Halfmoon Bay in town. We walk to the City Council where Charlie has some business regarding the PEP. After that Mark, who is the Chairman of the work project in Stewart Island, drives us to the house on the hill where PEP people live. Then he shows us the area around. We pass the Golden Bay and the Observation Rock, then climb up from the Halfmoon Bay up to the hill.

We go to the City Council and leave our things there. Then Charlie and I walk to the Museum of Stewart Island. We look at the forest service, and then buy some pie which we have for lunch. We walk to Malcolm's house. First we go to the wrong place, because it turns out instead to be the home of the previous owner of his house. Finally we manage to find his place. Apart from Malcolm, we are greeted by Margaret, Alister and Rose.

I do some bush walks with Rose for about one and a half hours, then come back to the Stewart Island Travel. While waiting for Charlie I buy one T-shirt as a souvenir. I have two paua shells from the beach of the three islands the names of which are Faith, Hope and Charity.

This island is rectangular in shape. It stretches approximately 40 miles from East to West, and as much from North to South. The area is nearly free from both frost and snow, even in winter. This is because it is close to the sea. The population of the permanent residents here is approximately 500. It is full of native bushes, for example rata, mutton bird, rimu, ferns and flags. Some of the native birds are tui, bell bird and tomtit.

We leave the Stewart Island at around 4:30 pm. Then we go in a car to see the places where Charlie's PEP is currently working on. These works are, for instance, clearing the grass by the roadsides and filling in swampy areas. Then we pick Bruce up after he has finished his work at the TY Aluminium smelter, and return home.

Inverness has the population of around 50,000. There are several big factories, for example the Tiwai Aluminium smelter, the Alliance Freezing work, and another two freezing works. All of those mentioned give workers very high wages. There are also other smaller industries. There is a factory area not far from the city. It sits on what was once swampy grounds, but which has now been filled up to make it higher, together with a good drainage system fitted in.

The plane linking the South Island with the Stewart Island that we took can accommodate 10 people including the pilot. It takes only 20

minutes to fly across whereas the ferry takes 2 hours. The weather while we were on the Stewart Island was perfect. I could see that it had just stopped raining. Peaceful atmosphere reigned like that after a storm. When we boarded the plane in Invercargill, Charlie wore a rain coat similar to the one he had on when we walked the Milford Track. All morning it was overcast and drizzling. But during the twenty minutes that we flew over to the island, the clear front coming from the south drives the rain clouds away to the north. Looking from through the windows from inside the plane, one could see the sky as being divided into two sections. We flew away from gales into a good weather. Charlie reads passages from the Bible on faith, hope and charity.

Raining again, and overcast and cold, though it is Wednesday 11 January. I go to the Queens Park with Melinda in the morning, wearing a rain jacket. This park is over 260 acres in area. We walk here a while and then go to the Southland Museum in the building which also houses the Art Gallery. They sits to one corner of the Queens Park.

There are several types of bird in Queens Park. They were put in something that makes it resemble a zoo, like the way they do it in Ashburton but much bigger. The fountain here is very beautiful. From the Art Gallery we come back and have dinner. Then Charlie comes back, and I go with him and Melinda to Gore because incidentally Charlie has some work to do there. He is interviewing 6–7 PEP people this afternoon. Along the way to Gore, on the hill to the right there is a monument of the last war among the Maoris, when the North Island maoris came all the way down here to attack those in the South Island. That happened about 150 yeas ago. After that, they join force to fight against the pakehas. We do some shopping while Charlie interviewed people at the Labour Department. Around 4 pm we leave Gore. We stop to look at Charlie's farm which he has let out for about nine months already. It has over 300 acres. There are no crops, only sheep and hay.

From Gore to Inverness a car coming from the opposite direction gives a head-lamp signal to tell us that there is a cop's car watching the speed limit ahead of us.

Overcast today on Thursday 12 January. I leave Invercargill by bus at 8 am. I have to travel by bus because there are no tickets available on the Southerner. Charlie and Jeanette come to see me off at the station. On the bus I sit with Helen from Methven, who used to be an AFS counsellor a few years ago. We stop for lunch at the railway station in Dunedin at noon. The bus picks us up again at 12:30 and we arrive in Ashburton at around 5 pm. Andy and Dad pick me up at the station. It rained in Dunedin, but started to clear up when we reached Canterbury. We could see the sun, but it was still cloudy.

Tonight I go to a potluck tea at Deborah's place. She is going to America next year as an AFS student. Now her family is hosting an AFS student who comes from the Kangaroo Island in the southern part of Australia, to the west of Tasmania. I make two fire sticks. After tea Andrew, who is an AFS student in a short program from Australia, shows his slides, then Kelly does hers and then I do mine. Then I show the fire dance. It is quite windy and the flames flutter about in every direction, especially when you stop spinning the torches. I do it first with one hand, and then with two. Then we call it a day and each returns to his own home.

The next day is 13 January, and it is a Friday. At 8 am we go to a freezing work in Ashburton. I woke up just in time. There are Deborah's father, Andrew, two other boys, Andrea, Ritchie and me. We look at the place where they herd sheep into the slaughter house which is called the stick pen. A pet lamb is used to lure the sheep away while a sheep-dog drives them from this side. We look at the main part, the storage room where meat is kept, the storage house and freezer the temperature inside of which is $-14°C$, the crusher for bones and meat. The storage house is very spacious. Inside it forklifts are used to stack frozen sizes of mutton up. It must be like living in the Antarctic in here. Then we return. Andy goes to see a doctor in town, and I sit in the car with Ritchie waiting. I get off the car to take one picture for him.

In the afternoon I go to Christchurch with Dad, Andy and Ritchie. Andrea is moving her belongings to Christchurch. Here we visit an aunt and an uncle at their home where we have tea and taste some of the wine he keeps. We look at the pictures she has painted, some of which have won prizes. We say goodbye to Grandma before we head for the bush. There had been some hail while we were in Christchurch. The weather has been overcast and cool all day today.

The next day is Saturday, and I wake up at around 8 am. At half past nine Brett's mother picks me up to go to their farm in Hinds. She comes together with her son. The last stretch of road before we reach their farm is private, and it is lined with tall trees on both sides to shield the wind. The big tall trees that stand in lines along the border of the farm are also parts of the windbreaks. There we have our morning tea, and then I show them some photographs from Thailand. There are Ross, Brett, and their parents. Brett takes me outside and show me the silver and golden pheasant, trouts in the pool, Canadian goose, pet sheep and ducks. When we come back we play chess together. We play two games and win one each. I win the first game, but it is actually Brett winning himself for he helped me several times. We have our dinner after 12, then we play a few games of snooker where I win Brett but Ross defeats me.

After that we have the afternoon tea, and then go together in a car to the south of Hinds, along the way that leads ultimately to Timaru. We go across the Rangitata River, then turn left a little further on before coming to a hut at the mouth of the river. We see some people fishing for salmon. The torrents are quite strong, the sea is rough, and it is windy. We meet one man who comes from Dunedin and stays at a holiday camp. He has been fishing when we talk to him.

We drive to the State Highway Number 1 again. On the way back, we stop once to have a look at a craft and souvenir shop, and then another time to have some ice-cream. At home we watch some of Ross's video-tapes from the Massey University, an open university similar to the Open University in the UK and the Ramkamhaeng† University in Thailand. They are about Agriculture, Horticulture and Accounting.

Ross relates to me how in 1975 a strong north-westerly wind had blown down tonnes of trees. It hit the West Coast at approximately 30 miles per hour, went across the Southern Alps and sped up just north of Methven where it caused no damage. Once it reached Canterbury, however, its speed had increased to the devastating 100 miles per hour. 'This is the same aerodynamic principle that lifts up aeroplane's wings,' he says. If you take a cross-section of the South Island, you will find that it is as he said. Starting from the West Coast the land rises steeply up to the top of the Southern Alps. Then it falls with a more gradual slope towards the Canterbury Plain. The South Island of New Zealand is but a solitary aeroplane wing facing westwards. In 1980 there was a big rain fall, 4 inches in one hour. Again on the 4^{th} of April 1982 there was a big hail storm with each ice pellet three-quarters of an inch across. It is not difficult to imagine how it caused a lot of damage. With balls this size coming down from the sky, no windscreens can remain. Even the boot lid, bonnet and roof of a car must have been blown in. This was a south-easterly storm.

A wharf, with its breakwaters, can affect the appearance of the coast-lines nearby. One example of this is the Timaru Wharf. It shades the waves in such a way that the Caroline Bay to the north of Timaru is being deposited by sand and shingles from the tide from the south, while the coast further up from it is being eroded by the tides at a very fast rate.

I am back in Ashburton at around half past nine, together with Brett's family. We stand talking in front of our house together with Dad and Mum. Then all of us come inside to talk with one another for another half an hour. After they have gone I take a shower, then bid everyone

---

† Ṛamgaṃhaeng

good night and go to bed.

I wake up early the following day, which is Sunday 15 January 1984. Hank and Carole are here for dinner. We sit talking together and look at some photographs. Then we come outside to take a group picture. When they have left, I go with Andy, Nicki and Flana to Grandma's place only to find that she is not in. We think she must be in Christchurch. The we visit Nana, talk with her for a while, then say goodbye and come back.

My class 602 have a surprise party for me at our place. I open the door and find everyone in there. I thought that I have come to the wrong house, and was about to turn back when I suddenly recognise the faces. Most of us are here, including Mr. Mathias, which makes it amazing how our small living-room could fit all of us in. It is a farewell party because soon I will be leaving for Thailand. I hope that I have made the most of every opportunity that has come my way so far. The tramping trip with my class was cancelled, but I had been on the Milford Track which is an experience that could not have been better. I have tried to study only those subjects that I could not have studied in Thailand, that is Sixth Form English, Music, Art History, Geology and Computer Studies. Computer is still a new thing. And at a school to boot, that was definitely unheard of.

After we had tea, I come outside to prepare the fire sticks because Neal said he wanted to see the performance. It is nearly 10 pm when everybody sits either on the lawn or on the steps in front of our house while the two sticks with a torch at each end turn itself round and round over my head, under my feet, in front of me and behind me. Everyone was seems to like the show and was excite about it afterwards. I take a group picture of everybody. Soon everyone says goodbye and leave. I have found out that it is not a good idea to ask people to come outside to watch a show like this unless you have some other things waiting for them inside to prevent them from leaving early. But there you go, no parties last forever, even our life if we consider it as a kind of party. Next week I shall have gone away to another world across the ocean.

We leave Auckland in the morning of 22 January 1984, flying Air New Zealand flight 05, arrive Sydney at noon, then depart Sydney one hour later on Singapore Airline SQ22 to arrive Singapore at 7:55 pm, and then travel from Singapore at 9:30 pm on SQ24 to find ourselves in Bangkok at 10:40 pm.

While in Ashburton, one of my friends at the Śrị Ảyudhảyạ sword school wrote to say that Vậe, who is our senior, had died. This came as a shock to me. His is amongst the most noble of hearts, and he loved us all. Before I came to NZ, he gave me a most beautiful sabre that he had made himself, having taken the whole day to do so. I saw him spending

ours working on it grimly and silently, without talking to anybody, which was by no means unusual of him. And when it was finished, he gave it to me and I was held in disbelief. There is a favourite poem of his which he always told us. It is in Thai, and it goes like this.

> Upàsarrg saun gon hàị don od́.
> Dàurâhod́ srạ̀ng gon con yìngyhăị.
> Mị mụe dāo ywў̆ kaḅ toa kloa arai.
> Sù tặ̆upai, mài vhăn mặ̄e van tạy.

Which means in English,

> Difficulty teaches man endurance.
> Perseverance makes one great.
> When you have both hands and feet with you, what do you fear?
> Strive on and fear nothing, even the day you die.

The time has passed relentlessly by, and it is already Sunday 14th February 1999 when I fly from Narita, Tokyo, to Cairn in Australia for a transit, and then to Auckland for a visit. When I returned to Thailand towards the end of January 1984, we feel so fresh and confident. We had lived ten productive months, and in New Zealand of all the places on earth if that is where it really was. The AFS Thailand's staff whom we know, Bị́, met us at the airport in Sydney, and she flew together with us to Bangkok. In the airport in Singapore while waiting for our connecting flight, some of us walked around and look at things in the shops. Already the surrounding has changed so much within the last twenty-four hours since we took off from Auckland. There were more people around, but there was less trust and openness in their speeches.

I walked around a little, but was generally only talking with friends the whole while. Suddenly we heard two persons quarrelling with each other. It turned out to be Bị́ arguing with one of the shopkeepers I had a feeling that she was in trouble, so I gestured to Òn and the two of us went to her sides to escort her out of the shop. I guessed correctly, for if Bị́ was angry, then that other person was mad. The last thing we heard, or the only thing *I* heard, was the former saying to the latter, 'You ruin your country!' I never find out what had happened. Seldom do I question friends' trouble.

My father and mother met me in Bangkok. Stepping out from the Donmuang Airport, I feel shocked by the heat and the pollution's. We took a taxi to my father's favourite hotel in Yaovàrạj, later dubbed the China Town. I have some of the photographs printed here, and they came out very well. But the rest of them I did in Chiangmai and they look very miserable. All our dogs in Jiangmhăi had died from rabies while I was in New Zealand.

My classmate Philip comes to Thailand the following year to spend a year here as an AFS exchange student. He has not changed, but yet he seems not the same Philip I used to know when I meet him in this South-east Asian setting. Sometimes I feel like a complete fool when I am in Thailand, whereas when I am in other countries I can shine. Or was it the other way round?

My 6th Form Certificate became for the first time in the history accepted in Thailand. And I also passed the country's qualifying exam the application of which my brother had meticulously and courageously taken care of for me while I was away. He had been to every single meetings required of me, and had to sit among children ten years younger than him. Considering the fact that he was then already a father of a child, this was a remarkable feat indeed. I took the University Entrance Exams and was accepted by the Faculty of Science at the Chiangmai University. But I decided that I wanted to study another year with the rest of my classmates at the Montfort College. This has proved to be the only regret in my life, because I had always wanted to study Astronomy, and there goes my only chance.

The following year I was accepted again, this time to study at the Engineering Faculty, also at CMU. But I thought I wanted to do Medicine, so I went to Bangkok and took the second round of the UE exams there. This was against the regulation because you were not supposed to take these exams again within the same year if you have already been offered a place to study that year, unless you have declined that offer first, which was not the case in my case. So I was disqualified from both rounds, which includes the previous offer I already had.

After that, I came to live in Bangkok where I studied at the Ramkamhaeng University, which is an open university. There I studied Computer Science. The following year I took another UE exams, and this time was offered a place to study Engineering at the Chulalongkorn University. You must be crazy if you are a Thai and decline an offer from such prestigious a university as this. Still being scared by such a harsh measure on their children as the Thai Government's disqualifying my previous two UE results, I ask the Chancellor of the Ramkamhaeng University, Sukhum, with whom I happened to have studied with in the subject of Political Science. Back then in 1986 he still had not become a politician. I said to him that I did not want to study at CU for four years and then disqualified from both CU and RU. 'But,' I said, 'if I had to choose a hundred times between RU and CU, then I shall a hundred times choose to study at RU'. I had been pondering about this for a month. 'Because,' I continued, 'this was my first friend and a friend in need. I came here when I had nowhere else to turn to. Chula came sec-

ond no matter how you look at it, and it shall have to wait or disappear if needs be'. Disappointingly, my teacher Sukhum did not seem to be at all impressed by my loyalty to friends. He merely said, 'I can say nothing much about what CU would do if they find out that you also study here while studying with them. But what RU would do, that much I do know. And as far as I am concerned you will not be disqualified from here simply because you also study somewhere else at the same time. And if this is what we think, I am certain there shall be nobody who says otherwise'. I went on to study at CU. It proved to be incredibly difficult at first, because I read too much and practised too little. In undergraduate studies, especially in Engineering, you never read a lot of theory but solve the problems and play with these latter. The only thing that counts is that you always solve these problems in the same manner that you would have done in an open-book exam. This means that you search amongst your lecture notes, the various examples, the different theories, the many books at the library, *etc*, until you have solved the problem. You read the theories if you have to, but not until you do. With this very method you can do researches. In doing researches you have before you problems. These you solve by all means available, even coin up a new one if you must. This I had to discover the hard way. But only because I had come to this conclusion did I managed to finish both my Engineering degrees and my Computer degree. I received a BEng in Mining Engineering in 1991, a BS in Computer Science in 1992, and then a BEng in Electrical Engineering in 1993. From 1991 to 1993 I also worked as an engineer, and so I did for most of 1994. I studied at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology from 1994 to 1995 when I received an MSc. Then 1996 – 99 found me in a PhD course at the Tokyo Institute of Technology in Japan. So when I come to New Zealand again in February 1999 I flew from Narita, and on my way back returned to the same.

During 1985 – 87 I sang tenor in the RU Chorus, the Vaḍhàṇạ and the Màhạthăi Churches, and then for the Bangkok Music Society and the Bangkok Choral Society. At the BMS we formed a small group and go everywhere together. We went to Candràḅurị, Bànomrūng Castle, Phạtàem, Jiangmhăị, Malaysia and Singapore. Friedrich Nietzsche (1844 – 1900) once said, '...to dance beyond yourself! What does it matter that you are failures!' And then, '...better to be foolish with happiness than foolish with misfortune, better to dance clumsily than to walk lamely. So learn from me my wisdom,' he says, 'even the worst thing has the good sides'. Similarly Martin Luther (1483 – 1546) says, 'Ich kann nicht anders, Gott helfe mir!', while Immanuel Kant (1724 – 1804) in 1784 called us to arm with his 'Sapere aude!' Shakespeare puts

it more tragically.

Come what come may,
Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.

Every time that I feel sorry for myself for having forsaken my dream when I turned away from studying Science, and in particular Astronomy, I always think of these words spoken by Nietzsche through his Zarathustra, 'I forgive you what you did to me; but that you did it to *yourself* – how could I forgive that?' In a similar manner he says, 'One should hold fast to one's heart; for if one lets it go, how soon one loses one's head, too!' One should never be afraid to be different. 'Had I to carve an inscription on my tombstone I would ask for none other than "The Individual",' said Søren Kierkegaard (1813 – 1855), while Ralph Waldo Emerson says a similar thing, 'The individual is always mistaken'. How many people we know are misunderstood monsters! And how many the opposite? Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772 – 1834) wrote *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1798) with the same idea as I mentioned. When his Ancient Mariner *shot the Albatross*, what he did was renouncing all the misconceptions and false interpretations of man, and instead put his fate solely in the hand of his Father. The only reason he survived while all the others died was because he had put all his faith in God, and his life at the mercy of His Father.

'God save thee, ancyent Marinere!
'From the fiends that plague thee thus –
'Why look'st thou so? – with my cross bow
I shot the Albatross.

The *Albatross* here represents false hopes that work because of weaknesses of men. Its meaning is wider and more general than that of the Serpent and Satan in the Bible, because it means not only evils but all irrelevant things no matter how gentle and alluring. So he shot the Albatross, and yet he could not find God, and he found that he could not pray no matter how hard he tried. He was a lost child, yet God saw that he had courage.

The many men, so beautiful!
And they all dead did lie:
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I.

Then he saw water-snakes and the love for other living things no matter how low enters his heart. That very moment God saw that he know Love, and He accepted his pray.

O happy living things! no tongue

Their beauty might declare:
A spring of love gushed from my heart,
And I blessed them unaware:
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I blessed them unaware.

The selfsame moment I could pray;
And from my neck so free
The Albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea.

Courage is a good thing. But courage alone is not enough, you need to have love, the love for all other creatures in all the universes.

The moment that he finds love, he finds God. His place before this was not a limbo but a purgatory. He had detached himself from all other religions when he refused to believe in the Albatross. But he still could not reach Him because the weight of sin still hung heavily around his heck. Love changes all this, that lover for all creatures great and small.

From 1984 until 1999 I have written letters to people I met in New Zealand, but these are by far too few, much less than I had promised to do. I am no good at keeping in touch with friends. But through it all I have always been glad whenever I received a letter from Charlie. He believed in me when I no longer believed in myself.

The half-years before and after we turned into this millennium I spent in Thailand jobless. I translated from Japanese, English, and even once Portuguese into Thai, and from Thai into Japanese and English. I taught two courses, namely English for Master Degree and another course on Translation, at the Pradiśṭha Centre in Ḅaṇgkauk, after each of which courses I wrote two books whose translation in Thai† can be translated as *Interesting English* and *Free translation of English* respectively. I performed for BMS and the Bangkok Symphony Orchestra the stick spinning, in which flags replaced the usual fire at both ends of each stick, the Polovtsian dances‡ by Alexander Borodin (1833 – 87). I taught four other people to do some of the moves with one stick, so that they could help with the performance. There were also some professional dancers there, but I had nothing to do with them for mine is totally on a volunteer basis, and I received not a single penny for doing it. The sale of the tickets is said to proceed to AIDS projects.

O, I am a free Lanna! Do not forsake me!
I am a free Lanna, and professions escape me.

---

† In that order, 'Bhaṣạ Angkṛiṣ an nạ soncaị' and 'Plạe kleḍ Ankṛiṣ'.

‡ In his opera *Prince Igor* (1890).

O, I am a Lanna without a profession.
A Lanna with no professions.

Then I went to Paris for a month and started my study on Mathematical Modelling of Economics. I studied at the Department of Mathematics at the Université Paris 1, Panthéon – Sorbonne. It is a DEA master degree course which may subsequently lead to a PhD one. I have been told more than once by different persons to give up doing a PhD, to get a job and lead a *decent* life. 'But is everyone not doing just that nowadays?', I thought. I was already even back then writing, and I knew then as I know now that it is no more the PhD I want, than the process of doing it. To be yourself is to be misunderstood. What do we wait for, really, when we have dreams? We shall never be this young again.

People borrow too much from other people. Some say that if you do it nobly then it is all right. But even these, to me, are still borrowings all the same. It is worse if you do it for some earthly benefits, less so if for Arts. Some do it like a game, keeping counts of those ideas and things they have covertly appropriated, like a womaniser does the counts of virgins they have slept with. As Shakespeare has put it in his Love's Labour's Lost,

'There is no such sport as sport by sport o'ertrown,
To make theirs ours and ours none but our own:

A 17^{th}-century English playwright whose name is John Dennis once said thus, 'That's my thunder, by God! The villains will not play my play, but they steal my thunder!', when a new stage technique he had devised up for was used in other people's play while the play he had written was binned. Originalities in ideas almost always triggers a conflict. And the magic thing about a fray is that whoever watches it long enough will soon join it. Some refute other people's thought simply because they regret not having said it themselves. Again Shakespeare must have known all about this when he wrote for his Love's Lobour's Lost,

The effect of my intent is to cross theirs:
They do it but in mocking merriments.
And mock for mock is only my intent.

Good friends often are different from each other. This rule of thumb is not necessarily restricted to people. Thus Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill (1874 – 1965) said in his speech on 30^{th} December 1941, 'We shall never descend to the German and Japanese level', while Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882 – 1945) on the other hand dropped the bombs on both Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. The UK and the US seem to be two inseparable bosom friends. We see a similar thing happened again

when Tony Anthony Charles Lynton Blair (b. 1953) in 2002 preached educational programs for the new, post-Taliban Afghanistan, while George W. Bush bombed the country's civilians. Myself, I have no opinions because I do not personally know any of them, and it was not me who voted for them. However, I think it is interesting to note that, at least in the case with the US, you sometimes have these namesakes who seem the worse side of their counterparts. George Herbert Walker Bush (b. 1924) ended the Cold War between the West and the Eastern Europe in 1989, and Theodore Roosevelt (1858 – 1919) received the Peace Nobel Prize in 1906.

The trouble with federal democracy is that the president of the states is too powerful – he has, in the case of the US for instance, the power to decide the fate of all the twenty member nations of the Federation – that he makes his nations seem like someone who is suffering from the multi-personalities syndrome.

I like Airports, they are my second home. For one thing, the temperature in them is always just right, no matter where you are. Then there is this spacious disabled toilet where you can easily and sufficiently clean yourself without much trouble. And there are many different places safe enough for you to sleep, as long as you do not seem homeless. The same is true with the Cairn Airport, even though it is small. The disabled toilet here is as clean and inviting, the surrounding as refreshing as any other good airports elsewhere.

As a city, Auckland is unique. It has one third the population of the country, one tenth that of London and sprawls over a larger area than that of Greater London. As such it is the only metropolis in New Zealand, but it has no high-rise buildings. The area around Auckland, that is the sea, the harbour, the gulf and the islands are also strangely charming. On some of the islands can be very secluded even though it may be only hours from the city by boat. As late as 1983, at the earliest, there are schools where students do not wear shoes to school.

During the Industrial Revolution the Kiwis on this side of the globe suffered. T. H. Potts who discovered the great spotted kiwi met a hunter in 1871 who claimed that he had killed over two thousands kiwis. At around the same time kiwi skins were being thrown in sacks into the Thames because there were more of them than the market demand.

The kiwi was known to to the Maoris as the hidden bird of Tane, the forest god who is greatly feared. A female kiwi is bigger and heavier than a male. Hers are the duty of laying the eggs and protecting the nest from predators, his that of incubating the eggs. The egg weighs one fifth of the normal weight of the female, and a full quarter of her weight after having laid the egg. In other words, a kiwi lose a fifth of her original, normal

weight when she lay an egg. The egg takes approximately seventy-five days to hatch. She normally lays her eggs starting from August, which is late winter, one after another with an interval of about 22 days in between, to up to three eggs. She keeps her male busy incubating and nursemaiding if she lays her eggs as many as three.

If it ever comes to fighting, you do not want to fight with a kiwi. A kiwi, especially a female one, fights fiercely by holding its opponent fast with its beaks while attacking the same with its claws, which are powerful. If her opponent refuse to retreat she would do it time and again until she dies. This is one of the reasons why Kiwi has replaced Silver Fern as the national symbol of New Zealand. Both Maoris and Pakehas alike identify themselves with this bird. You may say that it is the one thing that unites the people of both races together.

All scientific names of kiwis start with *Apteryx*, that is *wingless*. But as all other birds, a kiwi used to have wings once when it used to fly about. There are now five species of kiwis, three of which are brown and the rest two grey. It seems to be a rule that the three brown kiwis increase in their body size the further south they live. They are namely the North Island kiwi, *Apteryx australis mantelli*, the South Island kiwi, *Apteryx australis australis*, and the Stewart Island kiwi, *Apteryx australis lawryi*. Both of the two grey kiwi species live in the South Island. They are the great spotted kiwi, *Apteryx haasti*, also known as roa, and the little spotted kiwi, *Apteryx oweni* which has a home now in the bird sanctuary on Kapiti Island just off the coast of Paraparaumu, a seaside settlement north of Wellington where sunsets silhouette the South Island in the distance and the Kapiti Island in the foreground.

I board the Qantas Airways Flight QF0060 from Narita at 10:30 am on 14 February to come to Cairns, and from here on the same day QF0013 at 10:30 pm bound for Auckland. Arriving in Auckland I sit at the airport and wait until it is light before I get on a bus to come to town. In Auckland I walk around with my rucksack on my back. Walking past the Aotea Centre I see the sign advertising that Les Misérables is on here from January until March 1999. Auckland is like no other places in New Zealand, if this is the New Zealand I used to know. There is a potluck mixture of different things. On the streets a sign says 'Japanese Sake', further on there is another which says, 'Mississippi. Pool, bar', soon there appears another, 'London Bar. Bistro'. Others you know at a first glance that they are either a sex shop or a house of some dubious shows. This city is more of a sound than a bay. It borders on to the sea where there are numerous islands the more populated ones of which are connected to each other by bridges while for the other or the more distant ones you need to take a ferry. I do not check in at the Youth Hostel but

take a bus, or rather a coach, to Turangi at night. In New Zealand you use the words *bus* and *coach* exchangeably. But not so in the UK where the latter is used for big public vehicles for long-haul journeys, whereas the former is used to describe the public local omnibuses. Monday 15 February 1999, at 7:50 pm travelling by the Intercity Coachlines I go from the Sky City Coach Terminal in Auckland to Turangi. The coach ticket costs NZ $ 46. The building where the coach terminal is situated has a tall tower above it which looks impressively like those you expect in a scientific fiction. It acts as an antenna for some broadcastings, and also I think one could go up there for a fee to have a bird's-eye view of the city and the sea. Arriving there at 1:44 am (according to what is written in my ticket anyway) I walk to the YHA but have to wait until it opens in the morning.

Some of the banks you find in downtown Auckland are ABS, Bank of Hong Kong, Bank of NZ, and Countrywide Bank. Among these, I found that the Countrywide Bank gives the best exchange rate for traveller's cheque. The best exchange rate of all can be found not at a bank but at Thomas Cook. There is a small catch, however, because it charge $ 5 for commission.

At 7:30 am I buy a tour for $ 20 to go to the Tongariro National Park. They will drop us at one place, then we have to walk through the national park to be picked up in the afternoon from another. Since I have not checked in at the YHA, I can not leave my backpack there. So I walk with that and my camera case.

There are more than ten people who come with us in the minibus. When I start walking there are other people also who has come by some other means. Some are school students or Boy Scouts. By and by I lag behind other people because of my rucksack and also because I take too many pictures. This is a very educating walk, as I will find out before long. It leads you through the natural process of destruction and recreation.

You start off walking along what seems to be a normal nature walk. There are trees and plants along both sides of the path, and behind these mountains. Soon the density of the trees starts to diminish until it vanishes. Here is the area of active volcanic activities.

The area of this national park is officially said to be 78,651 hectares, but according to some other sources more than 80,000. There are three active volcanoes, namely Mt Tongariro, Mt Ruapehu and Mt Ngauruhoe. This is a World Heritage Area, and the only one in the North Island as such. In the South Island there is also only one World Heritage Area, that is the South-West New Zealand World Heritage Area. But it includes four different national parks and is much larger than the Tongariro NP.

The Tongariro NP, however, is unique with its dual WH status due to both its natural and cultural values.

The path leads me up the mountain, at the top of which you can see three beautiful lakes below. The shade of the green colour of the water in the lakes is so strangely beautiful, they look like some huge precious stones. The water along the edges of the lakes are dark and light shades of brown alternately as the surrounding earth and debris diffuse towards their centre. As a rule, I normally enjoy climbing a mountain more than descending it, since the force experienced by the former changes more gradually whereas in the latter this force comes as impulses. But here is one example of an exception to this rule. The path which leads down the slope is steep and is the same path followed by the debris, so I assume this is the quickest descent. It is extremely difficult to *walk* down the path because the face of the slope is so steep and the ground so loose. For similar reasons, it is also impossible to *climb* down. But it is easy and fun to *slide* downwards the way one plays the ski, that is throwing your weight alternately on the left and the right foot, forming behind you a sinusoidal track. This way I manage to catch up with, and even overtake, several people in front of me. This descend is so steep that when I stop mid way down the slope, standing with my feet sidewise, the way you would stand on the slope of a snow field, the knee of my upper leg is above that of my lower one, and the ground on the same level with my shoulder seems so close I could have touched it at an elbow's length. No one can descend this slope without getting his hands dirty. At this point the ground is all barren, totally devoid of life.

The path leads next along the crests of the hills. Below there are valleys the floor of which is so level, with some odd rocks here and there, which makes them look a mixture between the sea on the moon and the surface of Mars. Yet on the floor of some of these valleys is what looks like a dark fluffy carpet, which I think is either the porous pumice or some similar rocks which was once that part of lava bubbles on the surface which cooled first. No needs to say, these are barren ground too.

But up here on the hills I begin to see the first signs of life. Soon there are tufts of grass here and there. These increase in number, smoothly but at a sure pace, and before you have time to say 'Bravo' you find yourself standing on a grass-covered plateau. I think that I not so much lag behind the others as loiter. I take a detour to visit a hut where tramping people can stay. The hut commands a magnificent view of the mountains, and I stay here as long as I dare to. This means that I have to quicken my step after this, and in the end have to run.

'Good, I just make it in time,' I congratulate myself upon reaching the car park. But the first greeting I receive from the tour's staff surprises

me, 'Excellent, you are here. We were thinking about leaving you behind. We are all waiting for you. Two ladies have a bus to catch, otherwise they miss their plane'. In disbelief I ask, 'But I thought I was on time,' I say, then add, 'What time is it now?' She tells me the time. Some how I have been deceived by my watch, I never find out since when. Climbing up the bus I try to make myself as small as possible, and quickly disappear into a seat. I must have been at least fifteen minutes late. 'Sorry,' I merely muttered though no one has yet blamed me for being late, 'it was my watch'.

There is no need for me to sleep here at the YHA because my coach leaves in the morning at 1:45 am. Turangi is a small, peaceful town. I find a place that sells fish and chips, buy myself a packet of these and bring it back to the kitchen at the YHA to eat. There is nothing much to do, so I relax and while away the time until my coach arrives.

Both the Ngati Tuwharetoa and Upper Wanganui tribes have ancestral rights to what we call the Tongariro NP now. The former has a claim to the largest area of the park which dates back to explorations made by Ngatoro-i-rangi, high priest from the Te Arawa canoe. According to the Maori legend the volcanic fires around here are kindled when he was in danger of freezing to death on the mountains. His prayers were answered by the fire demons of Hawaiki, who sent fire through White Island and Rotorua to burst out from the top of the mountains. To appease the gods, Ngauruhoe cast the female slave Ngauruhoe into the volcano which the local Maori later called Ngauruhoe by the poor girl's name. All the three peaks named became sacred to Tuwharetoa. The Tuwharetoa chief Horonuku Te Heu Heu Tukino IV became concerned for the future of these lands belonging to him as the sale of land increased. In 1887 he showed a great foresight and generosity by giving it to the Crown. His original gift comprised the 2,640 hectares which form the nucleus of the present national park. The 7,517 ft-high Ngauruhoe is typically cone-shaped, and is the most active amongst the three mountains. It erupts smoke and ash occasionally. In 1954 – 5 an eruption intermittently lasted nine months.

The Ruapehu, literally the *exploding hole*, is 9,175 feet high and perpetually capped with snow. It is a multiple volcano the flattened summit of which stretches 1.8 miles and incorporates an acidic, bubbling Crater Lake as well as six small glaciers. Now and then It would blow, and in 1945 it did again, raining dust over 56 miles in radius. On Christmas Eve in 1953 a lahar discharged from it pushed boulders and sand before it and hit a railway bridge at Tangiwai 23 miles away. Minutes later, a Wellington-Auckland express train plunged down into the river below and 151 people died. Mount Ruapehu is the major ski area of the North

Island. Its Chateau Tongariro-Whakapapa ski field is the oldest ski field in New Zealand.

At 6,400 feet the Tongariro is the lowest one among the three mountains. It contains a series of small craters as well as the Ketetahi hot springs.

We arrive in Wellington at 6:50 am on the same day. The coach fare from Turangi to Wellington is the same as that from Auckland to Turangi. There is nothing much I can do in Wellington at this hour, since the ferry leaves at 9:30 in the morning and the Aotea Quay where it takes off is from where the coach stops just about in the opposite direction of the city. The coach terminals and the railway station are within an easy reach of one another. Passengers who are travelling by ferry are given a lift in minibuses to the ferry terminal free of charge. The minibus goes along Waterloo Quay and Aotea Quay. Then it turns left, circles to the right and passes under a motorway and then under itself until it has nearly made a full circle when you are finally at the Interislander Ferry Terminal. On the back of the ticket there are maps showing the various ways you can get to the ferry terminal, which is very useful for those who bring a car because if you miss that first left-turn, then you are in a big trouble. The ferry ticket costs $ 39. The next bus leaves Picton at 1:15 pm, and is supposed to bring us to Kaikoura by 3:30 before it goes on further to Christchurch. The driver stops along the way in order that we may take pictures of the seals, and so we are 30 minutes later than scheduled. However, he did duly ask all the passengers first whether anyone would have minded being a little late. This road follows a magnificent coastline with which I fell in love back in 1983 – 4. At Kaikoura I check myself in at the Youth Hostel, and buy a ticket to go whale-watching tomorrow's morning. Then I walk to the South Bay, which is along the road towards Christchurch, on the other side of the Kaikoura Peninsula. The Youth Hostel is on the Esplanade, and its manager is Kuini.

Thursday 18 February, the whale-watching is not as spectacular as it may sound. Most parts of the whale are underwater, but the small part it shows is already huge, especially if it comes near the boat. We see the Giant Sperm Whale, which grows up to 20 metres long. Or rather we see their back and flukes, when these latter flip up just before they dive down. Amazingly 'Whale Watch' is a trademark here, of a company. Between today and 24th February are Andy and John's wedding, and family times in Christchurch, Ashburton and Methven. I would rather not go into details lest it bores you. Moreover it is a little too personal and I do not yet know you well. I remember that I could find neither the bride nor bridegroom, so I asked the police at the police station

in Cathedral Square. And amazingly they knew! The wedding was on Friday. That evening there was a reception at a hotel, after which we stayed at a motel. I remember this well because Tara fell out of the bed. And since hers was on the upper berth, *that* was serious. The barbecue party at Nicki's place on Saturday was special, the swimming on Sunday was memorable, and the visit to the fire station in Methven where Ritchie volunteers in a fire brigade was touching. Oh yes, we also visited Grandma and I played the piano at home.

'Tara' is Irish Gaelic. It means *rocky hill.* 'Mallory' comes from the Old French, *malheureux*, and means *unhappy* or *unlucky.* 'Alastair' is the Gaelic variation of *Alexander*, which is Greek and means *man's defender.* The Scottish version of this name is 'Allister'. 'Charles' is Old German for *man.* Historically a *churl* is an Anglo-Saxon peasant. 'Charlie' is a nickname of *Charles.* 'Albert' is Old English for *high born* or *brilliant.* 'Ben' is Hebrew for *son.* It is usually a shortened form of other names, for instance Benedict, Benjamin, or Benson. 'Benjamin' in particular means *son of the right hand.* 'Zoë' is Greek for *life.*

Wednesday 24 January, Dad and Mum take me to Christchurch. Then I take a Lazerline coach to Nelson, the ticket of which costs $ 40. This must be the first time I pass the Lewis Pass. If Arthur's Pass is a mountain, then Lewis Pass is a hill. Apart from these two, one other pass links Canterbury with the Westland, that is the Burke's Pass which is merely a pass, neither a mountain nor a hill. The Lewis Pass was opened in 1939. In 1864 Arthur Dudley Dobson rediscovered the old Maori route that is now named after him. The Lewis Pass is 2,838 feet high, the Arthur's Pass 3,032 feet. One simply does not talk about the height of the Burke's Pass. By the Rose Express bus I go from Nelson to Picton. The ticket costs $ 17. I stay in Picton tonight. At the New World Supermarket in Nelson, a packet of crisps costs $ 1.69 and a can of Coca Cola $ 1.39. Two supermarkets that you see everywhere here are New World and Woolworth.

Catch the ferry Arahura, the *pathway to dawn*, in the morning at 5:30, Thursday 25th February, to Wellington. For ferries this early you pay the Super Saver Fare, which is two thirds of the full price. The fleet can carry up to 126 vehicles and up to 997 passengers. Another one of the Interislander ferries, the newer Aratere or the *quick path*, can carry up to 150 vehicles and up to 350 passengers. Mayor Michael Fowler was responsible for the replacements of some beautiful Victorian buildings with many of the the present tall, glass-clad buildings, from about the mid- 1970s to the mid- 1980s. The Beehive was built during this period. Some says that because of earthquakes, glasses are better than bricks. But others reckon otherwise. The Old St. Paul's Church was built in

1866, the Government Buildings in 1876, the General Assembly Library in 1897 in Gothic style, and the Parliament Buildings in 1922. The Alexander Turnbull Library boasts a remarkable collection of NZ and Pacific history.

The great quakes of 1848 and 1855 raised the land by 5 feet. After these, people realised that it was safer to build in wood, and therefore when the Government Buildings on Lambton Quay were built, they were made entirely of native wood. I visit the new Te Papa Our Place, aka the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, on the southern bank of the Wellington Harbour which is also known as the Port Nicholson. It has a lovable exhibition of NZ's national heritage. Sandwiched between Victoria St, Wakefield St and Jervois Quay are the Library, Art Gallery, WCC Offices which I think is a World Cultural Centre, and the Town Hall. Surrounded by these is the paved space which turns into a footbridge that crosses in style the Jervois Quay towards an enclosed dock the opposite side of which is the Rowing Club. On top of this footbridge is a spacious planked floor, equipped with seats and some artistic objects. A little further north from this is another footbridge which crosses the same street. In the middle of the courtyard and high above the ground is suspended a globular shell of metallic fern leaves loosely joined together, which leave plenty of holes which allow one to see through it.

A cable-car goes up from The Terrace on Lambton Street up to the Wellington Botanic Gardens on the hill. I take the cable car up, walk to the Carter Observatory, to the Lady Norwood Rose Garden and the surrounding area, and then come down on foot. Wellington is a hilly city. To the north one sees houses lining the face of the hills. The rose bushes number 107 on the brochure, with 14 more miniature roses. Examples of the roses are Aotearoa New Zealand, Big Purple, Chanelle, Duet, Etoile de Hollande, First Love, Golden Delight, Hot Chocolate, Ice White, Jadis, Kiskadee, Love Story, Madame President, National Trust, Old Master, Pristine, Queen Elizabeth, Remember Me, Summer Dream, Tzigane, Europeana, Vienna Wood, Western Sun, Sexy Rexy, Youki San and Zonta Rose. All the rose bushes are lined in concentric circles, which are fitted inside a square-shaped ground the corners of which are the trial beds and the miniature roses. Four paths divide them into four quadrants, with a small fountain sprinkling in the middle. The 14 miniature roses are namely Angela Rippon, Coral Island, Dainty Dinah, Firefly, Holy Toledo, Kaikoura, KO's Yellow, Little Prince, Patio Flame, Patio Jewel, Red Ace, Rise 'n' Shine, Soroptimist International and Sunblaze. The flowering season lasts from the beginning of November until the end of April. Dead-heading is the act whereby you remove all the spent flower heads to allow for new flowers. Pruning starts in May,

with climbers and then the bush roses. This done, the beds are weeded, the roses sprayed, and the beds covered with bark mulch. Spraying is done from Labour Weekend until Easter. I guess that the this is the last weekend of October, and Labour Day the Monday before this. The roses are fed in September, December and February. This LN Rose Garden was opened in 1953. Lady Norwood is the wife of Sir Charles Norwood, a former mayor of Wellington. Both had done great services to the city. Old roses dating to Regency and Victorian times are being displayed in the Bolton Street Memorial Park, five minutes north-east from here on foot.

The coach I take from here to Auckland leaves at 7:50 pm. I have a few hours to spare, so I walk along the water of the harbour. Then I walk to the railway station, follow the Mulgrave Street to a supermarket, and then along the Molesworth Street to the railway station. On this latter street and close to Sydney St East I buy some fish and chips. At the railway station the Intercity coach leaves from Platform 9. The New World Supermarket was sandwiched between the Murphy St and the Molesworth St. There is a Food Mall on Manners St and Cuba St. It has been a good day.

I arrive in Auckland at 6:50 the following morning, Friday 26th February, then take the 8:30 coach to Brynderwyn, arrive there at 10:10 am, and then change into a Pioneer bus which leaves Brynderwyn at 10:20 to be in Paihia at 4:15 pm. This is a small bus where all the seats are covered with woolen sheep skin. We do not go to Paihia in the shortest line but take a round trip through the Northland Conservation Park. The bus stops along the way and we all walk into the forest to have a look at the biggest tree in New Zealand, a giant kauri called 'Tane Mahuta', *Tane* being the god of the forests. Others say that the name of this tree is actually *Te Matua Ngahere*. Kauri, *Agathis australis*, is a conifer found only in New Zealand. Its timber is said to be the world's best for boat-building. They were felled at a relentless rate during 1870 – 1910, and as a result all the millable forests were all exhausted by 1920. The biggest kauri has the girth that is exceeded in the world only by the giant sequoia trees in California.

According to Maori legend, the birth of all life occurred in Te Po, the stillness of a long dark night. The primordial parents are the sky father Rangi and the earth mother Papa. Tane their eldest son pulled himself free from them in the darkness and slowly pushed them apart. He decorated Rangi with the sun, the moon and the stars, and Papa with plant and animal life. Rangi's tear fills her surface with oceans and lakes.

We watch the video about Opo the friendly dolphin. In Paihia I walk

to the look-out point at Waitangi, which must be about two miles away. The road you walk on runs along the coast. To your right is the Veronica Channel. Then you reach the bridge which crosses over an inlet to a forest. A part of this forest is the Waitangi National Reserve. There is here at Waitangi the Treaty House. Across the water from here is Russel, the first capital of New Zealand. Three more miles across the water further on from Russell is the Motuarohia Island where Captain Cook anchored in 1789. Russell used to be called Kororareka. It is already dark when I walk back to Paihia.

The Waitangi Treaty House is one storied, and looks like a summer house with windows that may as well be doors since they reach right down to the floor, and a long veranda. Today the House is a national museum, an endowment to the nation from Lord Bledisloe who had only one condition, that is that it be fully restored. The document that was signed here in 1840 by Maori chiefs, English gentlemen, and Governor William Hobson on behalf of Queen Victoria, guarantee the Maori land rights, gives both them and the Pakeha the Crown protection, and admit New Zealand to the British Empire.

Back in Paihia, it was here that in 1834 arrived William Colenso who set up a printing press. A mission station was set up here in 1823. The first ship in the country, the Herald, was built here from where it was launched in 1826. The fractal features of inlets, bays, channels and passages along the coasts here are parts of the Bay of Islands.

Christians are the strangest people on earth, despite the fact that they share many believes with people of other religions. The Old Testament is essentially the same for Jews, Islams and Christians alike. The New Testament makes all the difference. Whereas in the Old Testament the theme is Fear, believers are called God-fearing people, the theme of the New Testament is Love, for Jesus preaches the love of our neighbours and enemies. Therefore Christianity is unique in that it contains two contrasting themes. God is beyond reasonings, and Jesus died on the Cross for us. There is more to dying for other people than meets the eyes. Everyone is dying for someone somewhere all the time. The Kamikaze pilots, the suicide bombers, soldiers, or even mobs fighting for democracy and freedom. But what Christ did was not simply to die for others but to forgive sins, of all things the Sins against God; 'For they know not what they are doing'. In one room at Auschwitz where there are on display a little-ease and piles of shoes, spectacles and, I think, combs, there is a line saying, 'Those who had done all this did not realise that we have to live with it all our lives'. They have no rights to drive this harsh conscience into their own offsprings.

Buddhism, on the other hand, is no religion. To be a religion one must

start from myths, which comes only with faith. The faith is then developed into a philosophy over time. Philosophies no longer have things to do with faith. One simply dose not have faith in a philosophy, one believes in it. Believing what is right and what is wrong is the basis of all actions. Therefore all sciences are based on philosophies.

Buddhism is essentially a religion of disbelief, for Buddha has told us never to believe in something simply because people have told us, or because it is in some books thus written, or indeed because it is the result of our own reasoning or conviction. All men are fallible. Therefore there are experts, but no authorities. Strong feelings of conviction make dogmatists of us. Certainty is rarely objective whereas truth is, because it is correspondence to the facts. But Truth is so evasive and difficult to find. It is often impossible to separate believes from it. What is worse is that the way we see facts depends on our up-bringing and education, both of which are never objective. As for certainty, it is usually no more than a strong feeling of trust and conviction based on insufficient knowledge. All kinds of knowledge are adaptations to environmental and to internal regularities, to long-term situations and to short-term ones.

If you are a Christian and ever doubt that there is an omnipotent Being that created everything, heeds one's prayer, and can exist in the mind, then I suggest you try praying for other people sometimes. It does not matter to whom your prayer is for, it could be one of your friends, relatives, or enemies, so long as it is not for yourself you are praying. Then you would perhaps find out for yourself something that I have found for mine. Nietzsche once said through his Zarathustra, 'You want to be paid as well, you virtuous! Do you want reward for virtue and heaven for earth and eternity for your today?' According to him also, every work of our virtue is like a star extinguished. Its light is for ever travelling. But prayers does not exist in Buddhism. A Buddhist may recite Buddha's purely philosophical teaching but should never pray. I pray to God for all Buddhists that they may find the true core of Buddha's teaching, which I think is wholly philosophical, and which Buddha says that one must find for one's self.

Unwanted animals around here are Feral Goats, Hares, Magpies, Mynas, Possum and Rabbits, because they damage trees. The Feran Goats, *Capra hircus*, came here with Captain Cook. They eat shoots of tree, thus prevent regeneration. The Hares, *Lepus europaeus occidentalis* or European brown hare, were introduced in 1851. They eat tree barks and young shoots. The Mynas, *Acridotheres tristis*, were introduced into NZ in 1870s. They are aggressive birds, and are therefore undesirable in the point of view of native birds. Magpies, *Gymnorhina tibicen*, were introduced in the 1860s from Australia. They eat insects, seeds, and

rob birds' nest. Rabbits, *Oryctolagus cuniculus*, were brought here by Captain Cook. They damage both trees and vegetables. Their digging can also cause erosion. These unwanted animals mentioned are eliminated by shooting, poisoning, trapping, fumigation, or repellents put on trees. I stay at the Youth Hostel here tonight. The next day, Saturday 27 February 1999, I leave Paihia at 8 am to go to Auckland. The coach leaves from the Maritime Building.

In Auckland, I buy myself a ferry ticket to go to the Waiheke Island. The ferry goes all the way to the mouth of the Waitemata Harbour, then finding itself in a more open water it cruises towards its destination. The trip is longer than I thought because the island lies farther away than I expected. It is half-way to the Coromandel Peninsula, so you could well imagine how far. From the pier I take a local bus to a bay where the YHA is. This is so completely different from Auckland, or from all the parts of NZ I have seen for that matter. It feels like some south-east Asian island. It would not have surprised me if school students go to school bare-footed. You have to walk uphill to the Youth Hostel. There is a road, but it goes in a zig-zag manner, so I climb up along the steep footpath.

The Youth Hostel in Waiheke Island commands an excellent view from the top of the hill where it sits. It borders the Seaview Reserve, where below is the Onetangi Bay with its white sandy beach reachable via the access way. I could have spent my time here all the afternoon, and I feel like doing just that too because it is hot outside with the sun shining and I am tired. 'But what is the point of coming all the way here, the ferry, buses and all, if you would have it your way and just sit and relax,' I muse. So I go outside, walk climb the steps down to the beach and swim in the sea in the bay. I swim out with the back-stroke for about 30 metres, come in with the butterfly, and keep repeating this until I want to stop. This way I can always keep my eyes on the things I have left on the shore. Even though this time there is next to nothing there apart from my shoes, I do it like this all the same because I prefer to keep my eyes on the land. It makes me feel safer. After fifteen minutes of swimming I am so refreshed that I feel like walking around the island. Blaise Pascal (1623 – 1662) may have been right when he said, 'Tout le malheur des hommes vient d'une seule chose, qui est de ne savoir pas demeurer en repos, dans une chambre'. But I think that here he merely intends to be witty, even though this wittiness of his is philosophical in a way because what he says is true. The thing is, we should never fear death more than an unlived life.

I start my long walk across the island along the Seaview Road until I reach the Onetangi Road, then find my way to the Onetangi Reserve

for forest and birds. This is a private reserve open to the public. On the Onetangi Road I buy some fish and chips, then sit to eat them on a nearby playground, opposite to a school yard. The Onetangi Reserve is a native forest with indigenous trees like the kauri, matai, miro, nikau palms, pohutukawa, rimu and taraire. On top of the hill is a large platform commanding grand views. I spend my time inside the reserve until it is dark. At dusk, the view of the bay and the island from up here is magnificent. It is already dark by the time I could get out of the park, so I keep myself to the roads and stop now and then to read my map under one of the few street lamps. The next day I leave the island in the morning on a ferry back to Auckland. Then I go to the airport to meet my parents and sisters who come to join me from Thailand.

A brochure issued by the Auckland City mentions eight groups of walkway. These walkways are graded in increasing difficulty levels as Path, Walking Track, Tramping Track and Route. For the Path you may bring your wheelchairs and push chairs, but for the Route you would need heavy footwear and boots. The Matiatia – Owhanake – Fossil Bay Walkways pass through DOC's Matietie Historic Reserve where, at the northern headland of the Matiatia Bay, there are terraces of an ancient headland pa and you must to treat the area with respect. The Church Bay Walkways pass through the Atawhai Whenua Reserve. Church Bay has been the site of the first church and mission on Waiheke since 1833. The other walkways are Oneroa – Newton Reserve – Blackpool, Hekerua – McKenzie Reserve – Palm Beach, Onetangi, Rocky (Omiha) Bay Reserves, Orapiu – Otakawhe – Pearl Bays, and Waikopou Bay.

I have spent some time planning out our trip, the results of which is the following. First we go to Waitomo on 28 Feb. to see the grow-worm caves, 204 km; then to Picton, 1 March, that is 443 plus the ferry; 2 March to Ashburton, 486 km; 3 March to Invercargill, 577 km; 4 / 3 to the Milford Sound and Te Anau, 400 km; 5 / 3 to Hokitika, 723 km; 6 / 3 Wellington, 401 km plus the ferry; 7 / 3 to Taupo, 464 km; 8 / 3 to Thames, 463 km because we will probably make a round trip of the Coromandel Peninsula also; 9 / 3 to Auckland Airport, 115 km; and 10 March everybody except me leaves for Thailand. It turns out that we follow this plan to details, which greatly amazes me.

We leave Auckland on Sunday 28 February 1999 by a rented car, Nhan being the driver and I the co-pilot. The next day we visit the Waitomo Caves. The cave here was first explored in 1887 by Tane Tinorau a Maori Chief and Fred Mace an English surveyor. By 1888 it is opened to tourists by the former. From 1906 it belonged to the government who returned it in 1989 to the descendants of the original owners. Not far from the Waitomo Cave is another cave, the Aranui Cave, where people

come to see stalactites.

Glow worms are larvae of the small fungus-gnat, *Arachnocampa luminosa*. They build their nest of mucus and silk in the shape of hollow tubes hung down from the ceiling of the cave or under tree branches. From below these tubes hung threads coated with sticky mucus by which they trap insects. Their life cycle consists of three weeks as eggs, eight months as larvae, then pupae, and finally adult. The adult flies only live a few days because they can not eat. The larval stage is the only time the insect can eat and is also the period during which it emits light. Caves are formed gradually as cracks inside limestone. The latter was formed 30 million years ago under the sea.

From the caves we go to Lake Taupo. Beside the lake enormous trees have been cut, leaving stumps one of which we now use as a table for our lunch. To the north of the lake is an area called Wairakei where the Huka Falls is. People come here to jet boat.

The Huka Falls are on Waikato River on which there are quite a few dams, for example the Ohakuri, Atiamuri, Whakamaru, Maraetai and Waipapa hydroelectric dams. The area is rich with thermal activities. We visit Orakei Korako to see the boiling mud. The river flows out from the lake in the northeast direction and then makes a turn and flows westwards. This makes most of the dams come with a lake to their eastern flank. All these lakes have names of of the corresponding dams.

We stay at Rotorua to the north of Lake Taupo and at night watch Maori dances at a place called Magic of the Maori near St. Faiths Church not far from the lake front. It is performed inside a marae, which is a hall made of timber and used for meetings. I do not know whether this is a proper marae or something similar that is only used for the performances. At the Ledwich Lodge where we stay the rooms are spacious. At night I swim in a small but heated outdoor pool.

The following day we drive back to Lake Taupo and have lunch there again. Then we continue south. We see Mt. Ruapehu in the distance. At Wellington we stay overnight at Sharella Motor Inn. Or it could have been Flag, I am not too sure. It is right behind the Botanic Garden. The next day we go to Picton on a ferry.

The Wellington Botanic Garden was established in 1868 and was managed by the New Zealand Institut. It has come under the management of Wellington City Council since 1891. In 1950 the Lady Norwood Rose Garden was being developed, in 1960 the Begonia House, and in 1991 the Treehouse Visitor Centre. The LN Rose Garden opened in 1953. The Begonia House has the tropical and temperate displays. The tropical area contains orchids, aquatic plants including the giant water lily, *Victoria amazonica*, as well as some carnivorous and epiphytic plants.

The temperate area has seasonal displays, namely gesneriads and tuberous begonias in summer and cyclamen, cymbidium orchids, impatiens and primula in winter. The Bolton Street Memorial Park was the cemetery for the Wellington Colony during 1840 – 92. It also contains the Heritage Rose Collection. For fifty years it had been not one but three separate cemeteries, namely Church of England, Jewish and Public. In the Garden there is the old Dominion Observatory built in 1907, the Carter Observatory and the Planetarium. We return our car, the Ford Escort Blue registration number WN 2945 to the office at the pier, before boarding the ferry.

Linking between Wellington and Picton are the Interislander and the Lynx ferries. The one we are on is called Aratika, I guess an Interislander because the other one is said to be fast and ours one is not. If Wellington is not a bustling town, Picton is yet far more quiet by comparison. We had left our rented car at the ferry terminal before boarding the ferry, so we pick up another car here. We have not driven far when another car overtake us from behind and the two elderly people inside open their windscreen to tell us that one of our tyres is wobbling. So we go back to the car rental company, and I get off and watch the wheel while Nan drives back and forth. Though I could not see wobbling in any one of the wheels we change the car anyway. If the hub is not symmetrical around the centre of the wheel, the latter could give the appearance of wobbling whereas in fact it is not.

We drive south along the east coast of South Island. At one place I see a marvellous stretch of pink on the ground in the distance where water in a salt farm has dried up, showing the colour produced by the crystal. We stop along the coast to have some crayfish. Further along the road we stop again to look at the basking seals at the Peninsula Seals Colony. Generally on the left hand side of the road are the coast, cliff and ocean. On the right hand side are sometimes farms and sheep. We have a brief look at Christchurch, at the Hagley Park and the Victoria Square, before carrying on further until we reach Ashburton.

Grown in plenty both sides of the road between Christchurch and Timaru are *pineis radiator* which was originally from US. They seem to thrive here better than back home. It's timber is an important export of New Zealand. The wood gives off nice smell and is used for building works. From Australia are pine and eucalyptus. This is the country where there are neither snakes nor dangerous wild lives. You can only see lions, for example, in zoos like the Orana Park which is an open zoo in Christchurch.

We drive from Picton to Kaikoura, Christchurch, then Ashburton where we stay with my Dad and Mum. The following day, Thursday

4th March 1999, we go via Lake Tekapo to Invercargill. I have been to this lake before, but its turquoise glacial lake still captures my attention as when I saw it for the first time. The Church of the Good Shepherd stands by the edge of the lake. Inside the church you can see the view of the Southern Alps and Mount Cook through a window behind the silhouette of the Cross that stands in the middle of it. A monument of the high-country sheep-dog, aka collie dog, stands high and nearby. This statue of the McKenzie dog was made by Innes Elliott.

The church was designed by R S D Harman. The foundation stone was laid on 15th January 1935, and the completed church dedicated on 3rd August 1935. Constraints were heavily imposed on its construction, because the nature must not be disturbed. Rocks were not to be removed, which caused some parts of the wall to be built on rocks. Stones for the wall must come from within 5 miles radius, and must remain unchipped. The original, wooden-shingled roof was replaced by slates in 1957. The wood that was used to make the cupboard in the Vestry was taken from the Tekapo Bridge which as demolished in 1954.

The area to the north of, and around Kaikoura is famous for its cray-fish. These are no fish, but an edible crustacean that look like a small lobster. They are different from lobsters in that they have no clamps whereas lobsters have two. They are also softer and easier to eat than the latter.

To make a long story short, we visit Charlie and Jeanette in Invercargill where we stay at their Gala Lodge, which is their home as well as an excellent Bed and Breakfast. I would recommend it to anyone who happens to come to this city. Then we drive to Te Anau, and then to the Milford Sound. The scenery along the way there is superb, what more can I say. The weather forecast has not been good this morning, Friday 5th March 1999, I have not lost track of the time. Charlie has said that if the weather worsen, they may close the Homer Tunnel, and it can be very inconvenient or even dangerous should find ourselves on the other side of it if it does. But when the majority of us want to go to there (myself included if a co-pilot could also have a vote), what else can I do but follow, keeping my fingers crossed. Fortunately the sky gradually lightens up. From Te Anau we pass Lake Gunn on the left and then Lake Furgus on the right. It is approximately 120 km between Te Anau and the Milford Sound. In front of the tunnel a sign says that it is 15°C, there is a light rain, heavier rains on the mountain, and plenty of water so hopefully the waterfalls should be great. Regarding water for consumption, trekkers are advised to carry Puri Tabs, whatever this means. 'Milford Rd closed,' the sign continues, 'at the tunnel from 9 pm until 8 am everyday until further notice'. This sounds reasonable

enough, nothing out of normal, because we hope that no business on the other side should make us stay there until that late.

At the Milford Sound all the peaks are covered with clouds. But the Fiordland is always wet, and I like this kind of weather when it is drizzling and overcast. In his description of the Milford Sound, Captain Cook says, 'Peaks so close together as not to allow any vallies between them'. On the way back the sky clears up so well we all feel refreshed. Between the Tunnel and the Milford Sound the road was winding, but now it becomes straight. We travel by the State Highway 94, then SH 6, and stay in Garston. From the Milford Sound back to Te Anau we logged 124 kilometres on our meter.

The North-Westerly hits the Stewart Island first, and then the Southland from the south. It hits the lands head-on, and so is easy to forecast. By contrast, the winds that hit the West Coast are whirlwind, and are difficult to forecast. To be registered on a book as a Bed and Breakfast costs $ 600 – 800 a year. Gardening in NZ costs, for an hour, from less than $ 10 up to $ 20 or more.

When morrow comes, it is Saturday. We visit Queenstown, Arrowtown, Alexandra, then drive to the West Coast where we pass the night. While the Milford Sound is majestic and the Queenstown magnificent, the West Coast is among other things dramatic. We start early the next day. Before long we stop at the Fox Glacier and walk to its moraine to have a closer look. Precipitous cliffs surround the place where we park our car. A few buses also park there, for many people come here to look at the glacier. Then we drive on along the coast, cut across the Southern Alps along the Arthur's Pass, and find ourselves again in the expansiveness of the Canterbury Plain. The Arthur's Pass is in the Craigieburn Forest Park which has the area of 44,165 hectares, and which is well-known for its ski fields in winter. The Pass was built in 1865. Here there are Candys Creek, which is a group of streams running down the face of the mountain. It looks like several Y-letters shaped from grooves. Here also there is a bridge called, of all the names, 'Kowai' No. 2. The word is obviously a Maori word. But if it were Japanese, it would have meant *ghastly.*

If you ever wonder looking at the steep walls of a glacial gorge, how it is possible for a river of snow to carve such a monstrous piece of work, then you may be interested to read the following lines. Do not be deceived by the soft, white snow innocently lying on top of the glacier! Beneath the surface, the weight of the upper layer of the snow presses upon those beneath it until these lower layers become ice. It is this ice that cuts the rocks beneath. As the middle part of the channel is thickest compared with all the other parts, the cut here is deeper. This trend accumulates

so, that what began as a U-shaped channel soon becomes a V-shaped one like a knife, and then the edge of this knife becomes ever sharper. On top of that, the pressure and the friction act to melt this ice, and the water gathers at the bottom of this groove in the rocks to become the sub-glacial stream that flows along until it emerge from the glacier snout at the terminal. This stream acts as a perfect lubricant, washes away the debris like sawdust, and take away the heat created by the cuttings as the result of which the ice becomes harder again to cut the deeper.

The Fox and Franz Josef glaciers are created from the same neve on a plateau in the Southern Alps. With the altitude 300 – 2,700 m above sea level, they are the most low-lying of their kind in the world. The neve is more than 300 m deep, and under its weight the ice is made at the depth of less than 100 m from the surface. When her lover died, the goddess Hinemoa cried and both glaciers are her frozen tears.

The remote coastlines of the Westland National Park is wild, and there are dense rainforest and glaciers. It has an area of 117,547 hectares. The Fiordland National Park has 1,257,000 hectares of area. It has dense rainforest, glacial lakes and valleys, fiords and snow-capped mountains. Its tramping tracks include the Milford, Dusky, Hollyford, Kepler and Routeburn. The Mount Cook National Park is an alpine park which is 70,013 hectares in area and has both the highest mountain and the longest glacier in NZ. The Mount Aspiring National Park has an area of 355,518 hectares. It has for tramping tracks the Routeburn, Gillespie Pass, Rees-Dart and West Matukituki. Together these four NPs mentioned make up the South-west New Zealand World Heritage Area, which is also known as the Te Wahipounami WHA. While we were driving along the West Coast, there were birds flying so low crossing the road. We once hit one, which made us feel bad. We also saw hawks eating the carcasses off the road. At Hokitika it was hot, sunny and summer. How summer here is valued, compared with those tropical places with their unchanging weather. The summer here is life and remembrance themselves.

We meet my NZ family at Andy's place in Christchurch. Then I co-pilot us on a tour to the Littelton Harbour. We drive up the hills at Cashmere, pass Sign of the Kiwi to where Nāuy, Òn and I used to run when we stay at Nāuy's place in 1983. We follow the coast line of the Harbour until we reach Lyttelton. The wind and the weather here are marvellous. Along our way we sit at the rest area overlooking the Harbour, and find it difficult to leave the place to get into the car. From Lyttelton we drive along State Highway 74 which passes through a long tunnel that must be no less than a mile long. The road brings us back to Christchurch, where we lose our way a little before we can find the

Hagley Park. We stop at the park to rest and walk around, and then we are off again. We find our SH 74 again and it soon turns into the SH 1 which is a motorway. It is getting dark because we had lost some time finding our way around, first to get to Christchurch and then to get away from it. We take the small street to the right that leads us to the Gore Bay where we stay at a Bed and Breakfast.

It was already dark last night when we got here, so we could not see the beautiful scenery that our B & B commands. This morning, however, with the homely breakfast and such views as we can see from the living room's large windows, we all fall in love with the place and only wish that we could stay here forever and a day. However we need to go, so having bid farewell to our hosts and their hospitable place we drive back to SH 1 and follow the winding road up to Picton. It is amazing to see how Nhan drives. Not long after we have passed Kaikoura, as we are driving down a gentle slope, I see a long pinkish line far away towards the horizon to the right. You have not seen beauty if you have not seen the salt works, when dried, from the distant. It looks so pink and shining, as though someone has drawn using a fluorescent pen a line on the wall-paper, except that it is in three dimensions. We make very good time, and arrive in Picton in time to return our car and get into the ferry at 10:30 bound for Wellington. We return our car here, and pick up another one there. The car rental costs around $ 90 for a manual and $ 100 for an automatic car, plus tax. A one-way rental is possible with an extra $ 30.

We drive to Wanganui where we have our tea, and then further on to Hawera where we spend the night. From here Mt Egmont is very close by. We have a good view of it in the morning while we drive along the road up north. These conic volcanoes are amazing because they have numerous rivers radiating from their central peak. Mt Egmont is also known as Mt Taranaki. The area around it is now the Egmont National Park, which must be the most circularly-shaped national park in NZ. Then we drive north pass Te Kuiti to Otorohanga where we stop at the Kiwi House, which is a native bird park operated by the Otorohanga Zoological Society.

The Kiwi is a flightless bird which belongs to the order of ratite birds that includes the cassowaries (Australia and New Guinea), the emu (Aust.), the moa (NZ, now extinct), the ostrich (South Africa) and the rheas (South America). The three species of Kiwi are the Brown, the Little Spotted and the Great Spotted. There are four subspecies of the Brown Kiwi, namely the North Island Brown, the South Island Brown, the Stewart Island Brown and the Tokoeka which was discovered only recently in the Haast area of Westland. The nostrils of the Kiwi are at the

tip of the bill instead of at the base of the same. The wings end in a primitive claw, and are some 30 to 50 mm long. Incubation period varies from 72 to 84 days,. They lay eggs of enormous size compared with the size of their body. They eat beetles and their larvae, caterpillars, cicadas, earthworms, spiders, berries and seed. Here they are made to eat all sorts of things from ox hearts to bananas, minced meat, oats, sultanas, tofu and vitamins. Outside the House there are aviaries for the Barry Rowe, Kea, Kaka and Wader. There are also the banded dotterel, barn owls, falcons, harriers, moreporks, spur-winged plovers, water-fowl and teal (Auckland Island and brown). The Tuatarium houses the tuatara, *Sphenodon punctatus*, which is often referred to as a *living fossil.* It is the sole survivor of the Rhynchocephalia, an ancient order of reptiles which were common throughout the world more than 200 million years ago. Their colour varies from grey, olive to brickish red. Males are larger than females, and may be as large as 600 mm long and weigh up to 1,000 gm. Here you also have Australian Coot, Banded Dotterel, Bellbird, Blue Duck, Karariki or parakeets, Kokako or Blue-wattled Crow, North Island Saddleback, NZ Dotterel or Red-breasted Dotterel, NZ pigeon, Paradise Shelduck, Pied Stilts, Pukeko or swamp hen, Scaup, Shoveler, Silvereyes, Tui, Weka and White-faced Heron. There are native trees which include Beeches (Red, Silver and Black), Five Finger, Hinau, Kahikatea, Kamahi, Kanuka, Karaka, Karamu, Kauri, Kohekohe, Kohuhu, Kowhai, Lacebark, Mahoe, Manuka, Matai, Miro, Papauma, Pohutukawa, Poro Poro, Puka, Pukatea, Puriri, Rewa Rewa, Rimu, Tanekaha, Tarata, Titoki, Toa Toa, Totara and Wineberry. Rimu is the Red Pine or *Dacrydium cupressinum.* The trees may reach 50 metre tall. Their branchlets hang down, while their leaves are almost needle-like when juvenile and scale-like, 2.5–3 mm long, when adult.

From here we drive towards the Kaimai Range before we go around it from Paeroa to Waihi on the Bay of Plenty, aka Whatarahanga. The Kaimai Range is home to the Kaimai-Mamaku Forest Park which has an area of 39,682 hectares and contains, among other things, bush walks, old gold mining and kauri milling sites, and rock climbing. North of this forest park is the Coromandel Forest Park with its 74,961-hectare area, historic mining and milling sites, volcanic land-forms, and various activities which include diving. We go along the Pacific Coastal Highway, but have to cut our driving short for we are running late. We cut across to Thames at the far end of the Firth of Thames, then drive to Auckland where we stay at the Silver Point Flag, 3 km from the Airport. I remember we visited a church somewhere, where on the stained-glass is written 'IHS', Iesu Hominum Salvatore.

Polynesian people inhabited the Pacific Islands and the Pacific Is-

land peoples settled in New Zealand around AD 700 or earlier. We call these people *tangata whenua* who were moa hunters. The ancestors of the Maori people today came three centuries later. According to Legends they came from Hawaiki nui, Hawaiki roa, and Hawaiki pamamao, thought to be islands in the central Pacific. Among them was Kuper, the explorer who discovered New Zealand. Or it could have been his wife, Hine-te-aparangi, because it was her who cried out, 'He ao! He ao!', a phrase which gives rise to the name *the land of the long white cloud* or *Aotearoa*. After that it was Toi who started the Great Migration, the coming of people over the period of several centuries in many canoes.

Because these canoes landed at different places of the islands, they developed into separate tribes. There were altogether 40 such tribes, so this was perhaps the approximate number of surviving canoes among which were Tainui, Te Arawa, Maataatua, Kurahaupo, Tokomaru, Aotea, Takitimu, Horouta and Nga tokimatawhaorua. The first thing one Maori says to another is asking where he is from. Now that most Maoris live in the city, urban tribes has developed according to geographical location. For instance, Maoris who live in Wellington are known as Ngati Poneke while those who live in Auckland as Ngati Akarana.

The marae is a place where meetings are carried out and distinguished visitors received. The finest of Maori poetry can be found in chants lamenting the dead in funeral ceremonies or tangihanga. Haka is a war dance which also marks manhood of the performers while poi is a graceful dance of women. Both are performed with performers wearing the piupiu or grass skirt.

Panels resting along the walls and posts supporting the ridge-pole are carved in ancestor images and tribal history. During the first half of the twentieth century the carver's art nearly became lost but for the government sponsorship established the Maori Arts and Crafts Centre at Rotorua. The moko or tattoo is no longer observed in newer generations.

Abel Janszoon Tasman, a Dutchman, discovered Nieuw Zeeland in 1642, a few centuries after the Maori migration. In 1769 Lieutenant James Cook, travelling in the Endeavour, landed at Poverty Bay two days after sighting the land. James Busby came in 1833 to maintain law and order. Then William Hobson came in 1839 to negotiate with the Maori people. The Treaty of Waitangi was signed on 6 February 1840 by Maori chiefs and representatives of the Crown. This date had been made public holiday, the Waitangi Day which was later changed to New Zealand Day.

In the morning, Wednesday 10 March 1999, I fly off to Cairns at 7 am. All the others in our companionship have half day more to spend while waiting for their Thai Airways flight in the afternoon. I have no

worries whatever for them, since Nhan is there and no one in our group is as apt in big cities as she is. Though I did plan the route, it was she who singlehandedly organised the get-together and in effect the whole trip was only possible because of her. Moreover, she had lived in the New York City of all places, the one of the few places on earth that I dread, and even enjoy herself living there! The accounts of what my companions do after I have left Auckland you shall have to ask one of them yourself, if you want to know. As I am not there with them, I know next to nothing. Walking inside the Auckland International Airport, I spied written on a T-shirt on sale there, 'I support two teams, NZ, and anyone playing against Australia'.

QF14 drops me off in Cairns, then it too is gone from our scene, at least as far as I am concerned. I take a bus into town, check myself into the YHA there. The place stands right on the promenade, so there is no better places if you want to be near the sea. My room is on the first floor. It has a huge window which opens on to the top of the canopy which covers the ground in front of the building. The canopy is so huge and inviting, that I am tempted to climb over the window sill to walk about on it. This, however, I do not. I can still remember how the roof of the bicycle shade gave way when I climbed over the window sill of our sword room at the Montfort College and walked on it. Before I knew what happened, I found myself stuck in the hole in the roof, with my whole body from my armpits down dangling in mid-air. Australian roofs should be tougher, but who knows. But I sit on the window sill with my back to the room and my face towards the sea, and I fall in love with this place.

I walk around, to the railway station and then to the piers. People here talks more roughly than the Kiwis, but you get used to it in no time. It has rained, but now it merely drizzles. At the railway station I come across the information on the Kuranda Scenic Railway. The brochure for this looks extremely attractive. The return ticket for an adult is $ 40. For a student it could be $ 26 provided that you have a current full-time Australian ID card. I try my best and ask whether there could be any discount for someone who holds a YHA Membership card. But unlike in NZ, the YHA card is not normally accepted here, as it proves to be the case this time. But amazingly when I say that I am a student overseas, and show the staff my Japanese University ID Card, he agrees that I could buy a student ticket. However, I am going to buy no tickets now, but instead shall buy one tomorrow. In the evening I walk explore the promenade, which is not difficult. There is a market close to the YHA, but there must be only a little more than ten shops or so, selling souvenirs and T-shirts. Every evening you can get a free meal ticket

from the YHA to dine at a bar by the hostel. The food is invariably either grilled steak or beer battered fish and chips. Behind the counter at the Youth Hostel is always Erin. He says he is known as Cliff Richard. Other staffs are Sean from Canada, Charlie who says his name is Yasser Arafat (b. 1929), Andy, and the two girls Orla and Taffy the latter one of whom comes from Wales.

I go to Kuranda on Thursday 11 March. This is a scenic railway. I arrive at the railway station ahead of time. There are some students from Japan in front of me in the queue. They are also buying the tickets to go to Kuranda, but the staff who sells them their tickets tells them, 'No, I'm sorry but you can't use your student cards here. It says here a current full-time *Australian* student ID card'. My turn is next, and I am quite prepared to pay the full fare. 'One student return to Kuranda, please?', I says as a matter of fact. 'Have you got your Student ID Card?', he asks, I should have guessed. 'Yes, but ...', I start, thinking that I should show him my student card anyway. Then the staff with whom I talked yesterday looks up and sees me and I him, and he says from behind the other staff, 'That's all right. He was here yesterday and I had looked at his card', he lightly concludes with a wink. In the lounge I talk with the two students, but I never tell them how much the ticket has costed me. One should be discreet.

Our train starts at 8:30 am to go to Kuranda from Cairns. My place is Seat 7 of Car 11. On the way back the trian leaves from Kuranda at 3:30 pm, and my place is Seat 29 in Car 5. The $ 26 rail fare that I paid includes $ 1 of Mareeba Levy. I stay at the YHA for $ 16 a night.

This railway line runs along 34 kilometres of the original Cairns – Kuranda track constructed in 1882. In only 100 minutes it rises 328 m from sea level, goes through dense rainforest, crosses waterfalls and passes through 15 tunnels all hand-carved. The train is really a relic. The interior of the coaches is mostly wooden. The lamps on the ceiling is shaped like the Canterbury Bell. The seats are hard, wooden seats, much similar to the third-class coaches still in normal operations in Thailand. From Cairns the train travels 10 km to the Freshwater Connection Station, passing the Cairns Airport on the right. Then it goes 13 km, through 13 tunnels to the Stoney Creek Falls, and then another 8 km and passing through two tunnels until we reach the Barron Falls which is 3 km away from the Kuranda Station. From here there is a Skyrail which goes up to the top of the mountain, but which my ticket does not include. I walk around, visit a library, buy a small umbrella It is very hilly around here. There is a huge boat set up beside the street and used as a restaurant. It is not a boat, only a building shaped like one. But it stands as though it is meant to float rather than rooted to the ground

this way. I walk in there and upstairs, and it really impresses me. But a guitarist is playing, and he plays in scales. I look at things displayed in the shops, then board the train to return to Cairns.

The Falls we saw along the railway line on our way here was spectacular. There had been a long bout of rains, so there was plenty of water on the mountains. The train stopped to let people get out and have a look. We walked on to the platform holding our umbrella or in our cap or raincoat, stood at the rails, and watch the waterfalls.

When it is dark, I walk to the Pier Marketplace, which is a large building inside which there are offices of various travelling companies. It is behind the Fogarty Park, while behind it are the piers. The Park is right at the waterfront on The Esplanade, which is the street I called the *promenade* earlier. I buy a trip to go snorkelling with Compass in the morning. It costs Aust $ 55, which includes free use of the mask, fins and snorkel, a buffet lunch, and boom netting.

Friday 12 March 1999, at 7:45 we board the boat on Pier A. It takes more than one hour to go to the Hastings Reef in the Outer Barrier Reef. We sail through the gap between the Green Island and the Arlington Reef on our right, and the Upolu Cay and the Oyster Reef on our left, all four of which are in the Inner Barrier Reef. At Hastings Reef we anchor. Then you can try the scuba free of charge. At the end of the trial you will be asked whether you would go for a dive. I don the diving gears, which comprises an aqualung, a diving mask, a pair of flippers, a weight belt and harness for the driving apparatus, and then join about five others for a underwater trial. We are told to breath normally through our mouth. I feel that it is easier to do this than snorkelling where you always suck in water, especially with the waves and all. At the end of the trial I was the last one to be asked whether I would go ahead for a dive. All my companions have answered that they want to come along, and so with no reason whatsoever that is what I reply. The instructor ask the question by making an 'OK' sign with his hand, and you answer with the same sign and move it forwards twice to say that you want to come along.

We dive down about ten metres. The bottom is partly sand and partly corals. There are some colourful fish and schools of smaller ones. We see a ray or a skate. A shark comes and circles us once, and then it goes away. It is a black-tipped reef shark, no less than two metres long. We look at the corals, so full of life. Then the shark comes again. I do not know whether it is the same one. It starts to swim around us, then disappears again. It swims so close, must be no more than five metres away. I can see its eyes and most of its details. When it comes back again for the second time, our instructor signals to us to say that we are

returning to the boat.

We pull up our anchor and sail further on to the Michaelmas Reef, where we anchor again. Here about half of us snorkel. As usually is the case whenever I try my hands on snorkelling, I drink some sea water. But sea water is unique. You only drink a little of it and it is as good as drinking a pint, or as bad or that matter. Then we do the boom netting, which is done by dragging a net behind the running boat with people clinging to it. The parts that are most fun to hang on to are along the edges of the wake, where the water is turbulent. On our way back I feel a little sea-sick, and throw up. There may be some complimentary wine and cheese, but how mean of them to offer these at this time. 'Of course, you would never be able to have any', I think. Then I put my head down flat on the table and already I feel better. You get used to the sea by and by. The worst part is when the trip ends when you just start to enjoy it. Sadly this is normally the case. We watch the video that our professional video-man has been busy filming. As I appear in it several times, and because there were also the sharks, I decide in the end to order one. I only want to show it to my parents. The company is doing well indeed. I never thought that I would ever dive, and now I have to pay another $ 45 for having done it. I never watch the video, but I have just ordered one which would cost me another $ 45. I say to myself that I will never again in my life dive. But how soon does one change one's mind! It is almost like when I had tried to quit smoking without success, no less than three times. Now it has been at least two years since I last smoked. And I had said nothing to myself this fourth time that I was going to give up the cigarettes. No sooner than we reach Cairns, I take a shower and dress, and dinner eaten and happy, than I find myself walking to the Pier Marketplace again without my knowing it, and there buy a ticket for another boat trip tomorrow.

> Let us once lose our oaths to find ourselves,
> Or else we lose ourselves to keep our oaths.

There's the Love's Labour's Lost! again.

The video of our dive had been sent to me at the YHA. It is made by H2O Video & Photo. The Great Barrier Reef is 50 – 70 km wide and more than 2,000 km long. You can see it from the moon.

Saturday 13 March 1999, to the Green Island, this time on a sailing boat run by the Ocean Free. We leave from Pier A at 9 am, and sail to a place where we moor, snorkel and then have a smorgasbord lunch. I meet several Japanese people. We talk and enjoy our time together. I am not sure if there are white tipped reef sharks or only black ones. When you snorkel, you blow out hard and breathe in softly. You push your mask at

the temple, put head up and blow air through your noses whenever there is water in your mask. When you dive with the aqualung, you blow out softly. You push the front button when remounting the tube underwater. 'Scuba' originated as an acronym for *self-contained underwater breathing apparatus*, and 'snorkel' came from the German word *schnörkel* which means *spiral*. It was previously written *schorkel*. The organising staffs are Nick who is the captain, Anna who comes from Norway, Richard from Windsor, Emma from west of Manchester, and Sharon from Winchester, that is all the last three of whom comes from the UK. Then we go to the Green Island where we walk around and relax. Then we go snorkelling again. This time there is a diving demonstration for those who want to dive. The cloud comes and it starts to rain, but we are happy on our way back. It rains heavier when we reach Cairns. It is nearly 6 pm, and I just make it in time for my dinner. After I have eaten, I walk to the Cone Cay Villa where my Japanese friends stay. It is further inland and then a long walk to the right. It is still raining and parts of the road are badly flooded. At several points there is nothing you could do but walk through the water. The strong wind makes my umbrella useless, but I hold on to it all the same. I hold the handle my umbrella in both hands, each hand holding each of its ends. But it is not a strong umbrella, and flips out of shape several times that I throw it away in the ;morning. I arrive Cone Cay Villa soakingly wet and shaking uncontrollably from cold. They put me in a shower, after which I feel warm again and greatly refreshed. They clad me in the hotel's bathrobe, then make some green tea and hot food for me. There are Akiko, Kana, Masa, Nobuko and Yuko. We have a good, long talk late into the night for they say they do not mind, and seem to mean it. And then I say goodbye and walk back to the YHA, again in the rain. In the morning the following day, Sunday 14^{th}, I take an Airporter minibus from in front of the Lyons Hotel and go to the Airport, the ticket of which costs $ 4.50. My flight this time is QF69 which leaves at 12:10.

—

> Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. (James, 2: 18)

—

PS. At the beginning of this book the line 'May my son travel with peace' is in Thai 'Khạu hàị lụk rak ɗǫendạng ɗǫy sàvasɗ́ibhạb'. In my previous book, *Thai grammar, poetry and dictionary* (2003), all the ạu's are misspelt as âu. This is due to an error in my TEX macro. Other errors are, for example, in page 47 *hgạn* → *ngạn* and *gạ̄ew* → *glạ̄ew*, and in page 51 *Ḷk* → *Ḭk* and *Ḅanggkom* → *Ḅanggom*. These errors are inexplicable, but were worsened by a dental trauma at the time when I wrote that book. Last but not least, this book is dedicated to my sixth-form teachers of English, Music and Art History who made me in New Zealand.